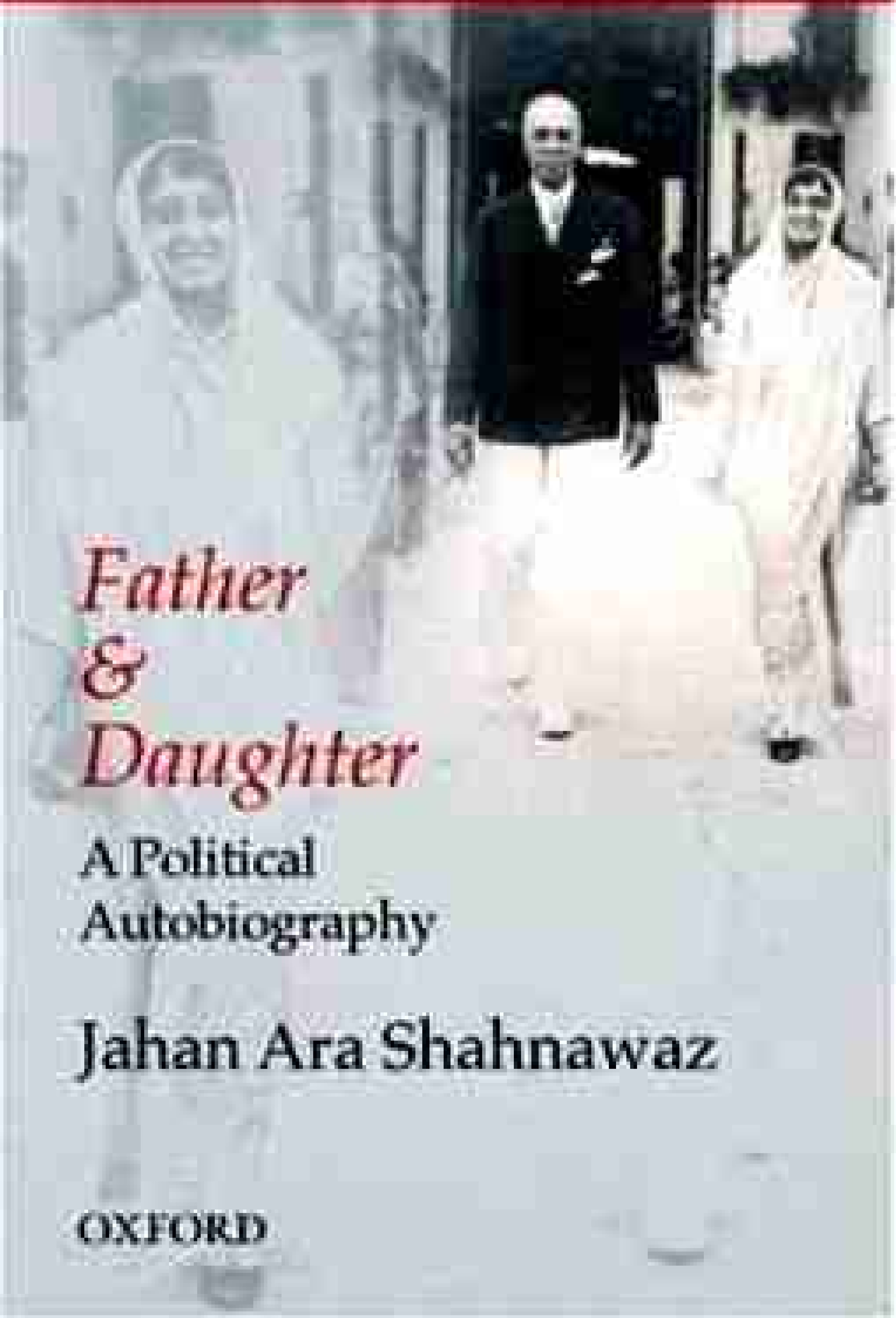
The Subcontinent Divided: A New Beginning



Father & Daughter

A Political Autobiography

Jahan Ara Shahnawaz

OXFORD

FATHER & DAUGHTER

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Series Editor: Ian Talbot

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SERIES EDITOR'S PREFACE

One theme of this series 'The Subcontinent Divided: A New Beginning' being produced by Oxford University Press is the human dimension of the 1947 partition. This has centred around the experiences of women, and the subaltern classes. It is concerned with Partition as a process rather than as a single event. There are an increasing number of local level studies of the social, economic and psychological impacts of the 1947 uprooting. This series will bring together these exciting and innovative approaches.

New understandings of the human dimension of Partition and its social legacy have called for the expansion of source material from the historian's traditional stock in trade of official and unofficial documents to include pamphlets, newspapers, journals, fictional literature and a wide range of oral material from formal structured interviews and questionnaires to song and folk tales. This volume in the series draws on another type of source material, that of the memoir. *Father and Daughter* by Begum Shahnawaz (1896–1979) was first published in 1971. The political relationship across the generation between the author and the leading Arain lawyer and politician Mian Muhammad Shafi is less well known today than those between other South Asian fathers and daughters such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir. Nevertheless, in their day, the contribution of Shafi and his daughter to the development of both Punjab and All-India Muslim politics was hugely significant.

Shafi founded the Punjab Muslim League and was a consistent advocate of the Muslim right to separate electorates. He used his powerful position as a member of the Imperial Council and later as Education and Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council to argue for both community and

nationalist causes. Begum Shahnawaz emerged from a family background of *purdah* and of giving birth to her beloved daughter Tazi at the tender age of sixteen to be a major advocate of women's causes both from the platform of the All-India Women's Association and the Muslim League. Like many other elite Indian women, she moved into the mainstream of the freedom movement as British rule drew to a close and displayed an influence and autonomy which appears remarkable not only for her generation, but for contemporary South Asia women.

The modern reader may also be surprised by the close social contacts which were maintained between the Baghbanpura Arain family and their political rivals. Muslim League politics were as fractious as they are today, but without personal animosity. Equally striking is the warmth with which Begum Jahan Ara Shahnawaz describes her relationship with 'Uncle' Moti Lal Nehru. A further reminder of a bygone era is the 'public service ethos' of the Arain family. Its entry into public life was not with a view to make money, but rather to expend it in the advancement of community and national causes. None of this is to present the late colonial period as a golden era. The narrative clearly brings out the importance of family connections and influence in political advancement. The author on occasion displays a patronizing elitist attitude towards the less fortunate whose cause she is advocating. Similarly there is little warmth in the references to her husband whose own political contribution was notable, but receives in these memoirs only passing mention. *Father and Daughter* thus deserves to be made available to a modern audience through this reprint because of the important insights it provides into the social and political mores of the late colonial era. Its *dramatis personae* include not just the influential Arain family of Lahore, but the leading Indian and British figures at the endgame of empire. The observations on such leading figures as Jinnah and Gandhi sustain the interest in a sweeping narrative which begins in the eighteenth century and concludes with Ayub Khan's promulgation of martial law. The behind the scenes descriptions of the Round Table and Simla Conference are of especial interest to the historian. A topic

frequently ignored in general accounts, but which comes across clearly in this memoir, is the significance of the Congress-Muslim League propaganda war in the United States of America. The Government of India equally found itself outflanked by assiduous Congressite lobbyists during the Second World War and made considerable efforts to put its views across. Begum Jahan Ara Shahwanaz was well placed to argue the Muslim League case in America. This contribution has been seldom acknowledged and is impossible to quantify, but may well have been one of her most significant achievements in the Pakistan cause.

Finally, *Father and Daughter* fits well into this series because of the insights it provides into the differential impact and ambiguities which surrounded the tearing asunder of the subcontinent in August 1947. Forewarned by the Nawab of Mamdot of an impending Sikh attack on Batala, where many Arain tribesmen were settled, the author sends her car to fetch Uncle Rashid. Jahan Ara Shahnawaz's family connections with the Nehrus are then deployed to prevent the assault with both Uncle Rashid ringing Nehru and her mother who was still in New Delhi seeing 'Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru, who respected her much, and he promised to help in the matter' (p. 211). While ordinary people were being swept along by the tide of communal violence, elite connections still counted for something and where it was possible could be used to stem its flow. 'Tazi and I could not sleep the whole night', the author recalls, 'but, thank God, Batala was saved' (p. 211).

These were but small victories in a situation in which communal violence used by politicians to serve their own ends spiralled out of control. Like many elite women, the author and her eldest daughter played important humanitarian roles in the weeks which followed. Indeed, Tazi, who was to die in an air tragedy in 1948, organized the Women's Voluntary Service which helped in the resettlement of refugee women and orphans. An office was set up in the former residence of Rai Bahadur Ram Saran Das at 11 Egerton Road. Tazi personally prevented the looting of the owner's property and helped his son, Gopal

Das pack the belongings when he returned from Delhi to Lahore several months after Partition. This episode which the author records in a matter of fact way (pp. 213–14) provides yet further evidence that the elite experienced the upheaval of Partition differently to the common people. It also reminds us that an iron curtain did not come down in the months immediately after Partition. Indeed the freedom of movement across the border at this time remains an envied goal for those currently seeking a normalization of relations between the subcontinent's 'distant neighbours'.

The reader of *Father and Daughter* is thus presented with tantalizing glimpses of a past which does not only seem a far off country, but which provides much food for thought when reflecting about the present condition of the subcontinent. Above all as with any memoir, the author provides the reader with privileged insider access to the world in which they lived. It is clear from this account that the author and her father lived not only through extraordinary times, but because of the force of their powerful personalities, left an important impress upon them.

Ian Talbot
Coventry

INTRODUCTION

Our awareness of life comes from the overlapping of human memory. Short and discontinued lines of human experience are continuously enmeshed in countless succeeding lines, which together, in a very small corner of the universe, make us conscious of existence. Only a tiny fraction of human memory is committed to writing, yet even these memoirs compete with each other for the primacy of our attention; and among these *Father and Daughter* by Jahan Ara Shahnawaz is unquestionably a notable contribution.

These memoirs beckon to us from an era long past, reaching out across from generations for which British Raj was the most pålpable manifestation of life, to a generation for which the idea of British rule is totally unreal. She begins with an account of her grandparents in the eighteenth century and ends with the promulgation of the first military rule in Pakistan.

Father and Daughter is the relationship which has been the most productive in South Asian history. Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto immediately come to mind. For a daughter to become the political heir constitutes the first stirring of women liberation, for in a man's world it is never attained by mere bequest but by merit. This has been so ever since Razia Sultana sojourned briefly on the throne of Delhi.

This book offers rather more than a political relationship between two generations giving us an insight into various facets of the author's life, and it is in this sphere that Jahan Ara Shahnawaz speaks for herself. The Victorian Age had lingered on longer in India than in England and only arranged marriages were socially acceptable, the rules being a little bit more strict in India, as the bride and groom were expected to see each othei for the first time at the wedding ceremony itself. It is remarkable

therefore that she should mention matters of her heart. At the age of ten or there around, she nurtured a tenderness for a young suitor who was a friend of her brothers. She recalls vividly her shock and grief when he suddenly died of pneumonia. She tells us touchingly how she had to hide her tears when she heard her father approach. She was writing in the main about politics, she has refrained from naming her suitor, it shows the depth of her emotion that she did not consign this completely innocent episode to oblivion.

Her parents married her to Mian Shah Nawaz, the widower of an aunt, and thus quite older to her. She was a very dutiful wife, but does not, in these pages, display any deep sentiment for her husband. When she became the Municipal Commissioner of Lahore she had heeded her father's advise and disregarded her husband's. Mian Shah Nawaz died at the age of sixty-two, the same age at which her father had died. She describes here the strain she had to undergo during the forty-day mourning period. She remarried in 1948 and mentions her second husband only once. She leaves us to conclude that if not socially, emotionally she was liberated.

The oldest avenue for women's liberation in South Asia has been literature. Begum Shahnawaz contributed prolifically to women and literary magazines and published a novel *Husn Ara Begum* which enjoyed wide popularity. Being the daughter of Sir Muhammad Shafi, her family background opened for her avenues of social reform and party politics. She came into contact with the Maharani of Baroda during an All-India Ladies Conference. She reserves her highest praise for Mrs Kamla Devi Chattopadhya, the outstanding author and parliamentarian as one of the ablest women in India. National and communal politics went side by side and she was persuaded by the Begum of Bhopal to form an All-India Muslim Ladies Conference as well.

The most memorable meeting that she recounts is her audience with HM Queen Mary, the Duchess of York (now the Queen Mother) and the four-year-old Princess Elizabeth (now HM Queen Elizabeth II). The nature of her political struggle

however, conducted her far from the hospitality of Buckingham Palace to one His Majesty's prisons in Lahore. This was on the eve of independence, an event accompanied by the most bestial violence. She relates how, after seeing starving survivors behind rows and rows of corpses, Raana Liaquat Ali summoned and berated the entire Punjab cabinet.

Begum Shahnawaz was one of the privileged few to see the warmth behind Fatima Jinnah's cold exterior, and is most candid about her sister-in-law Ruttie Jinnah: 'She was a person who felt lost and was deliberately trying to shock people.' Perhaps she was attracted to Ruttie because the age difference between her and Mr Jinnah was about the same as between Begum Shahnawaz and her husband; but unlike in her own case Jinnahs' marriage had been the result of a love affair. With Jinnah himself, her equation was not very easy. This was mainly because her father and Jinnah were often at odds. When Shafi opposed the Lucknow Pact, Jinnah disaffiliated the Punjab Muslim League.

Sir Muhammad Shafi was an ardent advocate for separate electorates, but the Lucknow Pact carried also a system of weightages by which the Muslim majority for the Punjab and Bengal was reduced to a minority, while the weightage enjoyed by Muslims in minority province was marginal, giving them no substantial advantage. Thus it is quite clear that it was Shafi who had justice on his side. The situation was unchanged in 1928 when Jinnah and Shafi clashed again over cooperating with the Simon Commission. Jinnah chose to cause a split in the Muslim League rather than abandon the Congress—a body from which he had resigned eight years ago. Jinnah wished to boycott, Shafi, the President for that year who chose to cooperate with the British. Shafi was vindicated when the Congress presented Jinnah with the Nehru Report—resiling from all the mutually agreed guarantees for the minorities. It is somewhat odd that she omits to mention that the arch revolutionary Maulana Hasrat Mohani had sided with Shafi rather than Jinnah.

Issues apart, Shafi was personally perturbed at having to differ with Jinnah. According to Begum Shahnawaz when Shafi was

seriously ill, he called out to Jinnah in delirium, but Shafi and Jinnah were reconciled only two days after Ruttie's death.

Sir Muhammad Shafi was in his element during the Round Table Conference. Ramsay McDonald had been his guest at Lahore, and despite Sir Fazl-i-Hussain's attempt to dampen his spirits. Sir Muhammad Shafi received resounding applause when he spoke. Shafi almost, but not quite, was able to conclude a communal settlement with Mr Gandhi. After consulting some fellow delegates Gandhi had come back to speak of his limitations. Jahan Ara confesses that she understood Gandhi's limitation when he was assassinated. It was during the Round Table Conference that she got to know Mr Jinnah well and to appreciate his legal acumen. Mr Jinnah had detected a flaw in a draft which every one else had overlooked.

Begum Jahan Ara Shahnawaz's own clash with Jinnah came in 1941 when she was expelled from the Muslim League for joining the Viceroy's Defence Council. Her explanation is that she was prepared to resign but that Sikander Hayat (who had himself resigned from the Defence Council) dissuaded her saying that Muslim representation in the army had gone down from 72 to 52 per cent; she was needed in the Defence Council to protect their interest. In one of her last meetings with Jinnah, he told her that he was working on a constitution for Pakistan, based on the French model. Later when Begum Shahnawaz questioned Liaquat Ali Khan about the draft, he replied that he never had access to Jinnah's papers.

She never got on with Liaquat Ali Khan since her daughter and son-in-law Major-General Akbar Khan had been arrested in the Rawalpindi Conspiracy case, but she very fairly tells us that it was Ghulam Mohammad who was furious at Liaquat having accepted an invitation to visit Russia, and that she had declined his invitation to become Pakistan's first envoy to that country, which shows that Liaquat was sincere in his acceptance.

The last tragedy described here is the death of her daughter Mumtaz Shahnawaz in 1948 very shortly after writing a book called *The Heart Divided*. Had she survived she might have written a sequel to the present work.

These are a very few glimpses of what the reader has in store. The age she represents was historic, the characters she potrays were heroic and she hereself was an insider. Her account bears the impress of an extraordinary personality as well as a seasoned stylist.

Muhammad Reza Kazimi
Karachi

1

THE EARLY YEARS

People have often said that I belong more to the nineteenth century than to the twentieth. Do I really? Perhaps from these pages, in which I have tried to portray something of my real self, readers will realize that my life and work did indeed bridge two eras.

The family to which I belong, is known as the Mian family, from a title probably conferred in the late fifteenth century. It is part of the third-largest tribe of the Punjab, the Arains. Tradition has it that the Arains migrated from Arabia to Egypt and from there to the Indian subcontinent sometime in the eleventh century. Ishaqpur, a small village about four and a half miles from Lahore, used to be the family seat until the Emperor Shah Jahan acquired the land as the site for the new Shalamar Gardens. In exchange for it he gave the family two revenue-free villages, and the head of the Mian family was to be hereditary custodian of the Shalamar Gardens. The two villages, as well as the custody of the Gardens, are still retained by the family, as both the Sikh and British Governments officially recognized the Emperor's gifts. A new village was built on the Grand Trunk Road, about one mile from the Shalamar Gardens, and became known as Baghbanpura. It was there, in my grandparents' house, that I was born on 7 April 1896.

My maternal and paternal grandfathers, Mian Nizamuddin and Mian Din Muhammad, were brothers. They were idolized by the people of the village. When a Hindu moneylender of Baghbanpura was nearing death, worried about the fate of his young son Barkat Ram, he asked my paternal grandfather, Mian Din Muhammad, to act as the guardian of the boy, who was

inheriting a great deal of money and property. He trusted my grandfather more than any of his well-known co-religionists and the boy was brought up like a near relation. We always looked upon Rai Bahadur Barkat Ram as an uncle within the family circle. The eldest of Mian Nizamuddin's six children, Mian Zahooruddin, studied law to become the first of many lawyers in the family and established himself in Dera Ismail Khan, where his practice flourished. His younger brother, Mian Shah Din, showed such promise that after his graduation he was sent for further studies to England, in the teeth of strong opposition from the family, who were then against young men going abroad.

Mian Din Muhammad had two sons, Ata Muhammad and Muhammad Shafi, who was my father. He was born at Baghbanpura on 10 March 1869, studied in the village school up to middle standard, passed his Matriculation Examination from the Rang Mahal Mission High School, Lahore, and joined Forman Christian College, where he used to write articles in English and send them to the newspapers. He was always good at literature, especially in English, but was poor at Mathematics. After his FA Examination, Shafi insisted on going abroad for further studies. His father did not think he could afford to send him to England, but both Mian Nizamuddin and Mian Zahooruddin persuaded him to do so. Shafi did well in England and was called to the Bar from the Middle Temple, gaining a scholarship in Constitutional Law. Many of Shah Din's and Muhammad Shafi's contemporaries in England were later to play great parts in their lives and in the life of their country—Mr Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Pundit Moti Lal Nehru, Lord Sinha, Syed Ali Imam, Syed Hassan Imam, Sir Abdur Rahim, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoolah, and Maulvi Rafiuddin Ahmad. They were two of the founder-members of an *Anjuman-i-Islamia* in London of which Sir Abdur Rahim was elected the first President and Mian Shah Din Vice-President. In 1890, Muhammad Shafi was elected President, and in February of the same year he was presented at the royal levy. He took a keen interest in the British parliamentary elections of 1892 and spoke

at election meetings. In a mock parliament which he joined, called the London Paddington Parliament, he was elected Secretary of State of India. During this time he also wrote an article in the *London Observer* suggesting the formation of a political organization for the Muslims of India, to be named the Muslim League.

Mian Zahooruddin's eldest son, Mian Shah Nawaz, born in October 1875, graduated from Government College, Lahore, before going up to Christ's College, Cambridge, where he met Dr Muhammad Iqbal and Mian Fazl-i-Hussain. Shah Nawaz and Iqbal became close friends, as did Fazl-i-Hussain, on a social level, while their political opinions differed radically. Shah Nawaz qualified as a barrister, with a first class degree, and on his return from England worked with his father for a couple of months in Dera Ismail Khan before starting practice in Multan.

When Mian Shah Din returned, he rapidly gained prominence in his practice in Lahore. Muhammad Shafi, advised by Mian Nizamuddin, then a District Judge at Jullundur, started his practice in Hoshiarpur, where he worked for a couple of years. Very soon, people came to know that he was equally good at civil and criminal law, and he moved to Lahore on the advice of his friends. At the age of seventeen he had been married to Shah Din's sister, who died a couple of months before his return from England, leaving behind one son, Mian Muhammad Rafi. Now, two years later, he was remarried to another cousin, a daughter of Nizamuddin called Amirunnisa. Brought up in accordance with her father's strong views on the importance of women's education, she had studied Urdu, Persian, and a little English. Her elder sister was married to Ata Muhammad, Shafi's brother, and another sister, Shamsunnisa, married Mian Shah Nawaz in 1902. Within a short time of his arrival in the capital, Shafi made a name for himself and became a prominent public figure. His personal happiness was complete when I was born, as, having had no sisters, he longed for a daughter, and from my earliest years I was his favourite, and very close to him.

Father had four children, two sons and two daughters. Mian Shah Din had three children: one son, Mian Bashir Ahmad (who later married my sister Geti Ara Begum) and two daughters, the elder of whom, Asghari Khanum, and I were of the same age and close friends. Mother, my elder brother, my sister, and I lived with my grandparents in Baghbanpura and Father had a flat in a crowded part of Lahore called Anarkali. Mian Shah Din, who had married my mother's first cousin, also had a house in Lahore, but the family lived in the village. The houses of the two families being side by side, cousins of the same age used to study and play together. There were over twenty cousins of my age in the family circle and I was very fond of one of them in particular, Khurshid Begum, who later became Begum Muhammad Sharif; she was three years older than I, and we were constant companions, spending nights in each other's homes. The family had organized a one-teacher school, which I joined at the age of four. The earliest recollection I have of these years of my childhood is of standing on the edge of the highway about half a mile from the village, waiting with an old servant for my father to come from Lahore so that I could sit with him in his gig for the rest of the drive home. Aged three or four, I used to clap my hands and say that papa was coming soon with bananas and grapes for me.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had taken the lead in reawakening the Muslims of the subcontinent and making them conscious that they were being left far behind the Hindus. Living in dreams of the past glory, they were unaware of the new Western civilization, and wedded to their luxurious habits as past rulers of the country, they had lost their grip on current events. In 1877, Syed Ahmad Khan founded the Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh and organized the All-India Muslim Educational Conference. His band of selfless helpers included Viqar-ul-Mulk, Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Shibli, and Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, supported by the writings of Maulana Hali and Akbar Allahabadi, who were setting the imagination of the Muslim nation afire with their poetry. Sir Syed started his work when the Hindus and the British were working in collusion

against the Muslims. Those who talk of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan having been put up to this by the British to bring about a rift between the two nations should study closely the conditions then prevailing, and they might draw the right conclusions. Soon after his return from England, Uncle Shah Din attended one of the sessions of the Educational Conference and after he had spoken from the platform, Sir Syed embraced him, congratulated him on his brilliant speech, and welcomed him into his own circle. Next year, in 1894, Uncle Shah Din was asked to preside at the annual session of the Conference, and he and Father became active members of the group, taking a prominent part in Sir Syed's movement for educational progress, social reform, and the general enhancement of the Muslim position. After Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's demise Viqar-ul-Mulk, Mohsin-ul-Mulk, and Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad took over and carried on his work.

The annual sessions of the Educational Conference were held in one of the capitals of the provinces and Mian Nizamuddin, Shah Din, Father, and other young members of the family would attend them regularly. The women of the family used to wait anxiously for the return of the men to hear all they had to tell about the Conference—the topics discussed, the resolutions passed, the plans formulated, and the functions attended. In the early years of the century, as a child of six or seven, I used to dream of the day when women would be allowed to attend such gatherings and even address them, and I would picture the moment when I would have a chance to make my speech to the Conference. Our elders discussed burning political and social questions before all of us; they would talk of the disappointments that Muslims were facing and of their interests being neglected. Fortunately for us, our men had no separate lives from their women-folk and their leisure was spent in their own homes, as they believed in sharing their thoughts and aspirations with the women of their families. We were part and parcel of our men's lives and it was to their credit that, although their women were not well-educated, they were giving them the training necessary to enable them to share their thoughts and actions. They were providing for their growing children, both boys and girls, equal

opportunities to get to know the problems confronting the Muslim nation and enter into the spirit of things at a tender age.

Talented young Muslims returning from abroad found, as they started entering the political sphere, that there were two forces working in the country, the Indian National Movement, with the Indian National Congress as its spokesman, and the British Government. What should their line of action be? Some who started working with the party that was striving for *swaraj* very soon became disheartened: others held aloof because they feared at the back of their minds that merging into political activity dominated by outstanding Hindu leaders might sound the death-knell of their separate entity. Under the Western democratic system, with the overwhelming majority of Hindus in India, Muslims would have to accept Hindu domination for ever in a united subcontinent. Muslim fears sprang from knowledge of the Hindus' caste-ridden society, which prevented them from even sharing a meal with a Muslim. The questions of cow slaughter, the playing of music before mosques, and Muslims being treated as untouchables—with all this, how could national unity be brought about? The deplorable condition of the depressed classes, who were kith and kin of the Hindus themselves, and a part of the Hindu community, was before them as an example. Muslims had to become a strong force by themselves for the sake of their very survival in India. The school of thought which viewed Muslims as a separate entity was expanding, and events in the county were helping to strengthen their belief. We came to know that there were two schools of thought amongst the Muslims, one which believed in separate electorates for minorities, while the other was for joint electorates. Most of the members of the Sir Syed group were for separate electorates and were of the opinion that Muslims should never think of accepting joint electorates, as this would mean being inevitably absorbed into the Hindu fold.

Shah Din and Father, after carefully studying the work of the Indian National Congress and the Hindu attitude apparent in connection with Muslim interests, had come to the conclusion that a separate right of vote and a separate political organization

of the Muslims were necessary to safeguard their interests and protect their own culture and traditions. With this end in view, they were in constant touch with leaders who had come to similar conclusions. We grew up with such talk and with mention of the names of great all-India Hindu leaders like Tilak, Gokhale, Surendra Nath Bannerji and Tagore, and some of the young leaders like Mr M.K. Gandhi, Mr G.R. Das, Pundit Moti Lal Nehru, and Mrs Sarojini Naidu.

My maternal grandfather was very much interested in the *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam*, a philanthropic organization set up by Barkat Ali and others. Mian Nizamuddin was not only one of the founder-members, but he constantly strove to make the association a success. My mother's elder brother, Abdul Majid, a brilliant young man who had died when I was only two years of age, had done excellent work in collecting funds for the new organization. Shah Din and Father were very much interested in the Anjuman and they gave a great deal of their valuable time and money to it. They came to know very soon that there were a number of factions in the so-called council of the Anjuman, and that a certain party that was intriguing to monopolize it could not be trusted in handling the affairs of such a national organization. This set them thinking, and they both had to fight a hard battle to purge the Anjuman of such unhealthy elements and place it in the hands of capable and sincere men. In so doing, they antagonized a number of those who were losing power, and who then tried to find an able lawyer to practise in Lahore; someone who could oppose Shah Din and Shafi in the sphere of politics. Mian Fazl-i-Hussain, son of Mian Hussain Bakhsh of Batala, a District Judge, was persuaded to come and start working in the capital in 1905. Father always deplored the fact that Fazl-i-Hussain came to Lahore in such circumstances, otherwise Uncle and he would have been glad to help such an able young Muslim lawyer. A number of other young Muslim lawyers—such as Dr Muhammad Iqbal, Maulvi Fazl-i-Din, Malik Barkat Ali, Chaudhri Shahabuddin, Mian Abdul Aziz, Pir Tajuddin and Mr Ghulam Rasul—had also started practising in Lahore, and were taking part in the public life of the country.

My mother, Amirunnisa, and my Aunt Zebunnisa (wife of Mian Shah Din) had begun to take an interest in the advancement of Muslim women. Mother was known as a rebel in the family circle and Uncle Shah Din used to call her the Mrs Pankhurst of the Mian family. Her father had been the first man in the family to teach his daughters English, and he and Father worked actively for the acceptance of the Islamic Law of Shariat by the Muslims in the Punjab, which was the only province in India where Customary Law had taken the place of Muslim Personal Law and where women had been deprived of the rights given to them by Islam. Father fought and won a number of cases securing inheritance for women. He had it established in his own tribe that a daughter could inherit in the absence of a son, although the tribe was following Customary Law, and that daughters could inherit if the deceased willed his property according to the Shariat Law. Always advocating the cause of the emancipation of women, he was often heard to repeat the well-known saying of the Prophet (PBUH): 'Heaven lies under the feet of the mother.' He adored his own mother and was an exemplary son, husband, and father. When his grandfather, Mian Channan Din, asked him on his death bed to write his will, father advised him to bequeath his property according to Muslim Law, although the daughters were his step-aunts. Grandfather, too, the quick-tempered, generous believer in the education and emancipation of women, made his will according to the Shariat Law.

By the time I was nearly seven I had completed my study of the Holy Quran and learned to read and write. I used to be very anxious to read the books that my mother bought, as well as the daily papers. The daily *Paisa Akhbar*, edited and published by Maulvi Mahboob Alam, was valuable to Muslims, while the books he wrote or published on the subjects of education and the teachings of Islam helped to bring about political consciousness among his co-religionists. He and my father were great friends and his daughter Fatima Begum and I became very fond of each other, although she was eight years older than I. A dear friend of my aunt and mother, Muhammadi Begum, had

written a number of books on the urgent need for the education of women and for social reform, and helped her husband, Syed Mumtaz Ali, in publishing a women's weekly paper called *Tehzib-i-Niswan*.

My paternal grandfather, Mian Din Muhammad, a well-built man of quiet temperament, used to spend his time after his retirement in prayers and reading the Holy Quran, and in social work for the poor. He loved children and each day he used to devote one hour between the evening meal and his night prayers to telling us stories from the *Arabian Nights*. The happy memory of counting the hours until next day, when he took up the story again, is still dear to me. We used to start watching the time from four o'clock onwards. One day, I went to his room and asked for a copy of the *Arabian Nights* so that I could read all the stories myself, and he smilingly promised that I should have one when I was nine years old. I argued that that meant waiting a long time, but he gently said that I had to, and on my tenth birthday, in 1906, I was given a beautifully-bound copy of the book. There was a good deal of talk in the family that a book like that had been given to me at such an early age.

The Russo-Japanese War worried me and I began working hard to understand the Persianized Urdu of the newspapers so that I could read the war news. Very few people have any idea of what an impact the Russo-Japanese War had on the minds of people in Asian countries, especially in the subcontinent of India. The British Government had fostered hatred of Russia, their nearest imperialist rival, in the minds of the Indian people. The eighteen months of this War left a deep impression on my mind, when everyone in the house used to wait anxiously to know the news of the day, and I can never forget how happy all of us, including the servants, used to feel about the success of the Japanese. That an Eastern nation, living in a small island, had made itself so strong that it could stand up to a great Western power like Russia, was a matter of great pride and rejoicing for colonies in the Asian countries. Those who were still under foreign rule were thrilled, and talk of working for freedom was heard all around. The siege of Port Arthur, where General Nogi

sacrificed two sons along with 60,000 Japanese soldiers, and then a few months later, winning the battle of Mukden, losing 40,000 Japanese lives, and last but not least Admiral Togo's victories at Tsushima, when the Japanese destroyed the whole of the Russian fleet within two days, all this brought about a revolution in the Asian mind. I still remember grandfather telling us of the special prayers being offered in the mosques for Japanese success. The hatred the British had engendered against Russia in the Indian people was destined to recoil on them, and thoughts of liberty were roused in the minds of the people. The result was that after the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, the Indian National Congress passed from the hands of the moderate sections into those of the radicals in 1906.

By the age of nine I could not only read and write Urdu but had become a voracious reader. Mother was fond of reading the novels of Sharar—the *Waverley* of Islamic Urdu literature—and I also started reading them. Any book not considered suitable for me, I could get from my mother, who was a lenient person. Sharar's novels gave me a great appetite for learning the history of the Muslim nation, and I started searching for books on Islamic history. My maternal grandfather, who had by then retired from service, was delighted to learn about my thirst for knowledge, especially in connection with the history of Islam, and he selected and gave me a large number of suitable books. He also began teaching me English, and later a Christian lady, Mrs Humphreys, was engaged to come from Lahore three times a week to teach English to my cousin Asghari Khanum and me.

The mind is made or marred by the impressions of childhood and the ideas imbibed then. My life was moulded by the books I read as child. The Prophet's (PBUH) life, and the lives of heroes of Muslim history like Khalid bin Walid and Tariq bin Ziyad, with their chivalry and remarkable leadership and the simplicity of their everyday lives, became my favourite books, along with *Alfarooq*, the life of Khalifa Umar (RA), which thrilled me to the core. Incident after incident was imprinted on my mind; the Khalifa walking into Jerusalem as a conqueror beside his slave on horseback; the Khalifa judging his own son as an ordinary

criminal and convicting him; the Khalifa translating Islamic ideology into reality throughout the land. The golden age of Islam, when all efforts were concentrated on ensuring fairer distribution of wealth and comfort without interfering with the individual's liberty; the simplicity of Khalifa Umar's (RA) life; his devotion to service and duty: all touched me deeply as a child and made me determined to strive for such ideals. Study of the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) life taught me to live not only for myself but for others, and never to swerve from the path of duty and righteousness. Such influences helped me, a child born in a strict *purdah* household in a tiny village, to face all that life had in store for me.

Uncle and Father, after their work in Lahore, used to spend Wednesday and Saturday evenings with their families. Our little world was confined to the village and the family circle, with occasional visits to Lahore in closed carriages; or to attend functions. On Saturday evenings about thirty or forty of us, old and young, used to gather in one house or the other, listen to music and songs, recite poems, arrange skits and play games. Uncle Shah Din used to write limericks about the different members of the family and read them to us on such evenings. Ours was a liberal family and we were never in *purdah* within the family circle. The atmosphere in the home was one that inspired everyone to strive for progress and social reform. Young men of the family who had gone abroad for higher studies were always pointing out in their letters home of how well-educated and advanced the women of other countries were, and that they hoped that the girls of their families would be educated and learn to stand on their own feet. The men's holidays were spent in taking us out for picnics and outings to places round about the village. The moonlit evenings were generally spent, especially during the hot weather, in the Shalamar Gardens. Sometimes on Sundays, Uncle or Father would take us for outings to Shahdara, Jahangir's tomb, or the 'new' Shalamar Gardens.

How delightful were those monsoon days of childhood when, after pouring rain, a rainbow would form in the sky and an elder

would ask if we wanted to go for a picnic, and we would eagerly snatch the opportunity. Mangoes, *jamans*, and other eatables would be packed and thirty or forty of us would be ready to go out. Women in *burqas* (veils) would follow the men to the main road, get into gigs, landaus and, if necessary, even into hired tongas, and we would be off. Sometimes we would be taken to our own orchards to see the trees laden with blossoms or fruit. How much we enjoyed those carefree picnics, playing games, cards, wandering in the forest and along the river. One of our favourite pastimes was *bait-bazi* in which the boys would challenge the girls, or vice versa, in quoting Urdu verses to each other. Bashir used to teach the girls of the family to read some poems, and a number of pages of *Musaddas-i-Hali* were learnt by heart by many of us. Maulana Hali and Akbar Allahabadi's poems made us realize, even in our childhood, that we Muslims, both men and women, had to work hard to compete with the other nations in India in order to regain our rightful place. I remember an occasion when Asghari and I defeated Bashir and won a prize of ten delicious mangoes. It was a great moment, as Bashir was supposed to remember hundreds of lines of poetry. He had learnt the choicest lines by heart, while we knew only ordinary verses, as we were too young to understand the master poets. When, in return for a beautiful line, we would repeat an ordinary verse, Bashir would lodge a strong protest. Uncle Shah Din would back us up by saying that the lines quoted by us were quite correct. Looking back on all those pleasant occasions, I realize now how our elders were planting the seeds of progress by making us vie with each other in a spirit of healthy competition. Throughout the week, we girls used to study hard to show the elders that we were in no way inferior to the boys in any sphere of learning.

The men of our family used to go to various hill stations for a couple of weeks during the summer holidays, while their families remained in the village. In 1905, Father decided to rent a house in Murree and take us with him. This was our first visit to a hill station and the thrill of it can never be forgotten. Roaming freely in the green valleys, climbing the hills, walking

barefoot in the streams, or just sitting and gazing at the changing hues in the sky and their reflection on the mountains all around, I sometimes put down my thoughts in prose or tried to compose lines of poetry in Urdu. All that wealth of beauty was opening up a new vista before my eyes at the age of nine.

After the so-called Mutiny in 1857, women in India woke up to find that their position in society had become untenable during the dark years when there had been no peace in India, and in a number of large towns educated women had started working for the emancipation of women. Madras took the lead and Bombay and Bengal followed, producing such women leaders as Mrs Sarojini Naidu, Mrs Margaret Cousins, Dr Reddy, Begum Suhrawardy and Mrs Ray. The first batch of graduates in different capitals had provided a wonderful example of selfless devotion to duty and, thanks to them, the concept of the education of women was taking root everywhere. Provincial women's organizations were coming into existence and a number of women were working in the Indian National Congress. In 1902, the Sikh conference delegates, including over 2000 women, and Shrimati Lajawanti collected one lac rupees, with which the Maha Vidayala School at Jullundur was started. Hindu and Sikh women were taking an active part in the social, educational, and political organizations that were springing up in the country. Muslim women could not do so because of their being in *purdah* and the fact that there was segregation of sexes amongst the Muslims.

One evening, when a large number of girls and women of the family were attending a picnic in the Shalamar Gardens, Uncle Shah Din asked us to gather on the terrace between the two large tanks, known as the 'mosque'. With moonlight, fountains playing all around, and a background of tall, dark, green trees in the distance, Uncle Shah Din suddenly got up and with a stick in his hand, he tapped the floor. Amid perfect silence he spoke to us, describing our useless lives, our talk only of clothes and jewellery, our gossip. Were such lives worth living? He quoted examples of great women of Islam, pointed out how Hindu women were advancing on the road to progress, and appealed to

us to consider the question of social reform and educational progress in earnest. Uncle's speech and personality were inspiring. When he said: 'Become worthy daughters of today and develop into women who can be the leaders of tomorrow', he spoke especially to us, the young girls of the family, and his appeal went deep into our hearts. What a brilliant, impressive speaker he was! He told us that he wanted us to organize a society of women of the Mian family for which he asked us to meet at his house the very next day. Accordingly, a women's meeting was held in Uncle's house and he and Father gave us ideas on how such an organization should be set up. After their speeches, they called upon Mother and Aunt Zebunnisa to speak, and then one or two other cousins addressed the meeting. Asghari and I were only nine years old, but the elders made us stand up and say a few words each. Instead of facing the audience, I insisted on turning to the wall to speak and Asghari did the same. Uncle appointed us Joint Secretaries of the Society and Auntie and Mother were selected President and Vice-President respectively. The meetings were to be held twice a month to discuss topics connected with education and social reform, and girls were to be asked to read papers. Moreover, we were to work actively amongst the poor women of the village as well as within the family circle. We learnt how to keep records of proceedings, write minutes, and carry on work in an organized manner. In November 1906, I wrote an article on the education of women and showed it to Muhammadi Begum, who published it in *Tehzib-i-Niswan*.

Father used to get a new novel every month from Thacker Spink & Co. of London, as a standing order of the month. Often, after reading a good story, he would relate it to us in Urdu. Once, when he told us the story of one of Rider Haggard's new novels called *Swallow*, I asked Father to give me the book. At that time, I could read very little English, but the desire to study the book made me work hard and within a short time I began to understand English well.

We heard that a film called *The Cigarette Box* was being shown in the town and my brother, uncle, and cousins were

talking about it. We girls longed to see it, and Father's permission was sought, but he refused it. When grandfather Nizamuddin heard, he declared that this was nonsense and that we should see it, and he himself took my sister and me to the cinema in *burqas*.

Nizamuddin, Shah Din, and Father were working within the family circle to discard all lavish expenditure on ceremonial occasions, and for the emancipation of women. Such was the atmosphere of family unity, high seriousness, and enlightenment in which the children of the family grew up.

It was my favourite pastime to sit with my grandmothers and ask them questions about the old times. My paternal grandmother, who was nearly sixty at that time, would tell us children of the days when there were no needles, reels of thread, or matches. She used to relate how they had to save fuel and bury live coals in soft earth so that the fire should not go out; and often spin at night in order to have the thread to sew their clothes in the mornings, especially when there were weddings in the family; and how difficult it had been for them to have their clothes dyed before the discovery of synthetic dyes. They would tell us all about the tribal and family feuds, the making and breaking of engagements, and about the marriages in the family. The power of the old ladies used to be supreme and no one dared disobey the orders of the eldest lady. My grandmother, who died in 1932 at the age of ninety-eight saw electricity, motor cars and even aeroplanes with wonder-filled eyes.

One evening, my maternal grandmother, who was nearly fifty-five years old, came into a room full of the beauties of the family. My uncle, Abdul Hamid, remarked that she outshone them all. Granny was wearing a black muslin *dopatta* (scarf) and her glowing cheeks, unblemished fair complexion, and blue-green eyes, which she had inherited from her Afghan mother, did indeed make her look beautiful. I remembered my great-grandmother very well, for as a child of four I used to nestle in her arms and stare at her lovely face and milk-white complexion.

One day, the daughter of one of Mother's friends in Delhi came to stay with us. She had a fair, very clear complexion. In

the morning, when she was washing her face with soap, my aunt remarked that she should not have done so, as it was not good for the skin. My aunt and I started talking about looks, and I was praising the visiting friend's beauty highly when she remarked that she was no better looking than I. What a surprise for me! I went into my room and gazed and gazed in the mirror. Did I have any looks? It was the first time in my life I had heard a remark of this type and I thought a great deal about the compliment.

In August 1906, Aunt Shamsunnisa, died after a protracted illness. Shah Nawaz had nursed her lovingly, proving a devoted partner, and the whole family was full of praise for him. Just the day before Auntie died, I had lost a brother fourteen months old to whom I had been very attached. Soon after Auntie's death, Mother brought her two-year-old son—my cousin—Riaz Ahmad, placed him in my lap, and said that God had given me a brother to take care of in place of the one I had lost.

One night earlier that summer I suddenly woke up to hear my father and mother discussing my betrothal. Mother was saying that there was no suitable match for me in the family, as Bashir would be more appropriate for my younger sister, and she had been thinking about it. She suggested that Father should take in hand a poor cousin who was then graduating, send him to England to qualify for a profession, and get me married to him. When I heard the name, I was furious and I made up my mind to commit suicide if they decided to do such a thing. After that name, Mother talked of another young man, belonging to a family of the tribe, whose proposal was expected. He was studying with my elder brother, Muhammad Rafi, and my youngest uncle, Abdur Rashid, and was considered a very promising young man. His people had been dropping hints, but as he did not belong to the family, Mother had not encouraged them. Father replied at once that was immaterial, as the young man belonged to a well-known family of Arains and he liked the idea very much. Uncle Rashid and Rafi too had often spoken highly of him, and after hearing my parents' talk, I had a peep at him to see what he looked like. When my Aunt Shamsunnisa

died and the forty days' ceremonies were over, one of my cousins asked me when we were playing together whether I knew I was about to be engaged to Shah Nawaz. I laughed outright, not believing I could marry an uncle. She then told me that she had heard my maternal grandfather talking to her grandfather about it. She said that, now that auntie was dead, Shah Nawaz was no longer my uncle, and such marriages were permissible in our religion. As soon as she left, I talked to my old *ayah*, and guardedly asked her whether one could marry one's aunt's widowed husband. She replied that it was allowed and I might have to do so. I protested that he was more than twenty-one years older than I, but was told that was immaterial, as he was a good man and had been an excellent husband to my aunt. Having always looked upon Shah Nawaz as my uncle, it was very difficult for me to think of him differently and it upset me greatly. For some time past, after having seen my brother's friend, I had been looking upon him as my future companion. His people had been visiting us frequently with presents of fruit and sweets, and Mother had been openly encouraging them. One day, a maid servant brought a miniature photograph of him in ceremonial Indian dress, and asked me how I liked it; I told her that he was pleasant looking. She went away and returned with a copy of the photo which I was asked to keep. I admonished the servant for doing such a thing, as such behaviour was not considered proper in our family circle and I trembled to think what would happen if my people were to know about it. All the same, I knew that, given the choice, I would marry him.

Father and Shah Din were both members of a deputation of Muslim leaders which waited on the Viceroy, Lord Minto, on 1 October 1906, to place Muslim demands before the British. The address was read by His Highness the Aga Khan who, young as he was, had presided at the All-India Muslim Educational Conference held that year, and had been chosen as leader of the deputation.

The idea of a separate political association for Muslims was taking shape, and I remember so vividly the evening when, sitting on the roof of our house in Baghbanpura, Father talked

about the name that should be given to it. He told us that, after careful consideration, he thought that the Muslim League would be the best name and we all agreed. In 1906, when the annual session of the Muslim Educational Conference was held at Dhaka in December, a new political organization was brought into existence with this very name. An organization named the Muslim League had been set up by Fazl-i-Hussain, Chaudhri Shahabuddin, Pir Tajuddin and others a little over one year before the establishment of the Punjab Muslim League. It was confined to Lahore, was inactive, and very few people knew anything about it. A conference of most of the Muslim leaders of the Punjab was now held in Lahore, Uncle Shah Din presided and a proper Punjab Muslim League was formed. In November 1906, Mian Shah Din was elected its first President and Mian Muhammad Shafi its General Secretary. Shah Din in his Presidential address said that, owing to the impact of the West, the whole of India was awakening to a new light and each community was becoming aware of its own particular rights and capabilities. Nationalist sentiment was spreading from the West to the East with extraordinary rapidity. Giving a historical perspective, he observed that there was a time when a magical cloud arose out of the arid deserts of Arabia, which, extending far and wide over a larger part of the globe, aroused the dormant peoples of the West. Then, unfortunately, with the passage of time the East went to sleep and was lost in luxury and lethargy. Now a third period had begun, when the West in its turn had come over to inspire and infuse a new life into the East, and the East was responding and showing signs of fresh animation and activity. Continuing his address, he went on to say that, in such circumstances, the Muslims of India had to ponder over the situation and see what they could do. Let them avail themselves of the British connection, imbibe the spirit of self-help and try once more to capture their lost strength and glory. Thus far they had attended to education, now they had to fight for their political rights. They had to realize that Muslim political objectives were different from those of other communities and hence their line of action, too, had to be different. They had to

build on their own separate foundation, and adopt and apply their own constructive methods. The general conditions prevailing in India were quite different from those in Europe, and the Muslims must, therefore, unlike some other groups, work with circumstances, moderation, and restraint. Finally, after pointing out that there was no active Muslim political organization in the Punjab, Mian Shah Din outlined the objectives of the new League.

> These consist of safeguarding the political rights of the Punjab Muslims, co-operating with the Central Muslim League and its branches for the unity and progress of the Indian Muslims, and maintaining friendly relations with all the non-Muslim communities of India, without, however, losing touch with the British government.*

Uncle Shah Din was appointed a judge of the Punjab Chief Court temporarily in December 1906. A hard battle had to be fought to secure a permanent place for him when a seat fell vacant. Father had to work hard for it and the success was celebrated by the whole family. Uncle was the first Muslim to be appointed a judge of the Punjab Chief Court, the highest office that an Indian could aspire to at that time. Shah Din was a brilliant speaker and writer, both in Urdu and English, and his speeches and articles were much appreciated. He did not have an exceptional practice, but was considered the ablest man at the Bar. He had a calm, commanding personality and, although he was short and thin, his face was very expressive and he commanded great respect. When he entered a room, there would be absolute silence. Nizamuddin once remarked that, although he was the elder, even he could not help but be awed by Shah Din's personality.

Once Uncle Shah Din had been raised to the Bench permanently, Father became extremely busy. Nawab Fateh Ali Qizilbash had taken Uncle Shah Din's place as President of the

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* *Life of Justice Shah Din* by Mian Bashir Ahmad.

Punjab Muslim League. Father's practice was on the increase and a number of jury trials in which he had appeared were being talked of everywhere. People used to flock to the High Court to hear Shafi's arguments, which would continue for days. In spite of such a flourishing practice, Father could not save much. He had set up a separate office for the Punjab Muslim League, an efficient clerk was placed in charge of it, and a great deal of money was being spent on running it. Donations to Aligarh College, the *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam*, and other Muslim philanthropic societies used to be given, and a number of widows and orphans in the family, the village and in the city of Lahore were being supported by my parents. Father's only brother having died young, he had to support his family, as well as his parents, who had sold most of their property to send him abroad.

I remember a certain day when Mother was handed receipts of cable worth about two or three hundred rupees that had been sent to His Highness the Aga Khan, Syed Ameer Ali, Ministers of the British Parliament in Great Britain. I was standing behind her while she was going through the receipts, when Father entered the room. She said to him quietly that she did not wish to stand in the way of this working and spending for the good of the nation, but while doing so, he should not forget the heavy burdens of the relations whom they had to support. Father immediately replied that he wanted his wife, children and others to understand once and for all that the Muslim nation had first claim on all that he possessed and earned, and he considered the Muslim League his eldest child, and everyone else came after it. Did we not know it already? For in spite of his wonderful devotion to my mother, whom he adored—every penny of his earnings was placed in her hands—and his exemplary fatherly love and solicitude for his children, his thoughts, every minute of his life, were for safeguarding the rights and interests of the Muslim nation, and for the freedom of his country. Shafi, a tall, well-built man, was considered the best-dressed man in the Punjab. He was easily approachable to all, and even the poorest man had access to his office or his room and could, if necessary,

stay in the house as well. He believed in securing the help of the people in power for the betterment of his nation, and used to entertain lavishly. He was well-known for making a success of the dullest party and putting life into lifeless gatherings. He knew how to organize a function well, and his very presence could make it interesting and colourful; both his friends and opponents recognized and admired this unique quality in him. People of every description, opponents as well as supporters, were entertained by him and political differences of any kind never interfered with his friendship in the social sphere. In fact, some of his best friends—including Pundit Moti Lal Nehru and Syed Hassan Imam—belonged to the opposition parties. Loved by young and old, whenever he was invited to a children's party, he would not only accept but take part and help to organize the games that the children wanted to play. With a congenial and harmonious nature and a smiling face, he welcomed every person, irrespective of caste, colour, or creed, in his house, *Iqbal Manzil*. If Mother ever asked him to admonish a servant, he would during breakfast, the only meal that he generally had alone, call that particular servant and say to him: 'Yar (friend), the Begum complained about your behaviour; be more careful in future, and give her no cause for complaint.' This was all the scolding that they would get, so it is no wonder that they were all so devoted to him.

Father was very proud of his tribe, had a good deal of research carried out about its origin and history, and his aim in life was to raise the status of his tribesmen to bring them on a par with the members of other tribes in the Punjab. Jats and Rajputs had well-organized associations working for their advancement, and they were standing united to help their own tribesmen. The Arains were a neglected tribe and the condition of the majority was deplorable. They were mostly uneducated agriculturists, hardly any of them were in the services and they were not being recruited into the Army.

One evening, Uncle Tajuddin, elder brother of Mian Shah Din, came to see Father and he said that he and Shah Din had done nothing to improve the status of the family. Persons

belonging to all sorts of castes had proclaimed themselves Syeds and Rajputs, but neither of them had bothered about these things. Father's face became red with anger and he replied that he was proud of being an Arain of Arab origin, and God willing, before he died, the tribe would be so well-organized that people would clamour to be known as Arains. He warned him, moreover, not ever to speak to him in this vein again because they were of the people and should always remain so. He had already started working amongst the Arains. The tribe consisted of thirteen lacs in the Punjab alone and soon an Arain Conference was brought into existence, an Arain House was built on Mohni Road and a weekly paper known as *Alrai* was started. It was due to Father's efforts that a number of young Arains became members of the services and ultimately the Army was opened to them.

Father rented a new house opposite the High Court on Fane Road in Lahore, and we moved there. My sister Geti and I joined the Victoria Girls' High School at Bhati Gate, inside the city of Lahore. The Head Mistress was Miss Bose, an Indian Christian lady, who was one of the first batch of outstanding young women graduates in India. We used to be carried to the school in a *doli* (palanquin) by two servants. Fatima Begum, daughter of Maulvi Mahboob Alam, was one of the senior students at the school. I was admitted to the fifth standard, was very happy at school, and made a number of good friends.

Our arrival in the Lahore house opened to me the doors of my father's huge library, full of books of every description and on every subject, and I revelled in them, even at that early age. Often, the light in my room would burn until the early hours of the morning, and during the day I would anxiously wait for nightfall in order to pick up my book again and read it through another night.

Our stay in Lahore widened our circle of acquaintances and friends. Nawab Muhammad Hayat Khan, Sir Sikandar's father and my grandfather, Nizamuddin, were great friends, his eldest son Sardar Aslam Hayat Khan and Father were just like brothers, and his eldest daughter Yusuf, later Begum Muzaffar Khan, and I used to play together. The new circle of Mother's friends

included Begum Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Begum Abdul Qadir, Begum Fazl-i-Hussain, Syed Muhammad Shah's daughters, Rashida Begum—Baji Rashida Latif—and Saeeda Begum, and Fatima Begum, who had become a Persian and Arabic scholar. A number of Hindu and Sikh ladies had also become her friends. My maternal grandmother had been the first in the family to attend a Government House ladies' party, which became an event of the year. Prominent women of different communities would attend that function, and the young girls were occasionally invited.

Baji Rashida, Saeeda, and Fatima Begum came to see Mother one day to ask for her help in organizing a Muslim Women's Association in the Punjab. They pointed out that a number of Hindu and Sikh women's social welfare organizations had been working for some time, but Muslim women had nothing of the sort. Mother welcomed the idea and a meeting was called at our house which was well-attended by women of most of the well-known families and an association named *Anjuman-i-Khawateen-i-Islam* was set up. Inayat Begum, Saeeda, and Fatima Begum were elected Secretary and Joint Secretaries, and Mother took over as President. Terms of reference, rules and regulations were framed and passed. Muslim women were to meet fortnightly after Friday prayers in our house to discuss and formulate proposals for the spread of education and social reform, and the securing of rights given to women by Islam. It was this organization that helped the Muslim women of the Punjab to organize themselves and take part in a wider women's movement later. After prayers, meetings would generally begin with a recitation from the Holy Quran, a promising poetess would recite a poem, a young woman would read a paper, and then the main topic would be discussed. Muslim women who had never met any one but the members of their own household thus got to know each other, and through exchange of thoughts and ideas learnt a great deal. By members of educated families coming into contact with women of old-fashioned households, the pace of progress was accelerated. Mother and Auntie also

started attending gatherings of women of all communities, and joined a number of other women's associations.

Both my grandfathers had decided that Mian Shah Nawaz's proposal for me should be accepted. While they were pressing it, Mother was openly encouraging the family of the young man I favoured, and this had started bickerings in the household. Meanwhile, Shah Nawaz's relative had also started visiting us. One day, the same maid servant who had brought the photograph told me that Rafi's friend had seen her and begged her to speak to me, as he was worried to learn about my grandparents forcing Mother to accept Shah Nawaz's proposal. I did not say anything in reply, but of course the anxiety was there at the back of my mind. At ten years of age, what could I say or do to interfere in the matter? Later, I told the maid servant to tell him to trust in God, for He would do whatever was best for both of us. Soon after the New Year, it was decided that my mother's youngest brother, Abdur Rashid, and my elder brother, Muhammad Rafi, should continue their studies in England and we learned that the grandfather of the young man was sending him abroad with Rashid and Rafi to study medicine.

January 1907 was bitterly cold, and suddenly we received news that Rafi's young friend had caught a bad chill and contracted a severe attack of pneumonia. Within a few days, his condition worsened and Mother went to see him. On her return home she related to the family how, when he could hardly speak, he would ask his mother over and over again in broken words whether they had done all that was required to welcome Mother, who was then visiting their house for the first time. Mother had returned full of the hospitality shown to her in spite of such serious illness in the family. Rashid and Rafi were constantly at his side until he died three days later. When I heard the news I went into a corner of our drawing-room and shed tears that almost choked me. Father suddenly passed through the room and when he saw me crying was anxious to know the reason. I wiped my tears quickly, replied that everything was all right, and ran out of the room. For a few days, I felt shy of Father and often wondered whether he had guessed the real reason for my

tears or not. The Almighty God had decided, and after that I had no interest left in betrothals and marriages. Let the elders do what they liked.

In March 1908, Uncle Shah Din presided at a meeting of the All-India Muslim League held at Aligarh. A number of important questions about the constitution, rules and regulations of the Muslim League were passed. The question of the affiliation of the Punjab Branch was taken up, and the leaders brought about a rapprochement with Mian Fazl-i-Hussain who was persuaded to accept the Joint Secretaryship of the Punjab Muslim League, but unfortunately the entente lasted only for a couple of months. Within one year branches of the Punjab Muslim League were organized by Father in all the key towns of the Province and the foremost person in every district took charge of them.

After spending a couple of months in Lahore during the winter, we went back to the village. In summer, Father rented a house in Simla and we all went there. The lower flat of the house had been taken by my Mother's uncle, Mian Ghulam Mohiuddin, and he and his family, along with a number of their young nephews and nieces, travelled with us. While in Simla, we met the family of Nawab Maula Bakhsh, who belonged to a prominent tribal family of Batala and was an Attaché in the Foreign Department of the Government of India at the time. We were delighted to meet his charming wife, a lady of a good Persian family whom he had married during his twelve years in Iran, and their three daughters. The eldest, Marzia Khanum, was very beautiful and Mother decided to ask for her hand for her brother, Abdur Rashid. Negotiations started and the proposal was accepted in February 1908.

In 1907, whispers of a new Reforms Scheme for transferring further power into the hands of the Indian people were being heard. Father was worried, as he was anxious that the Muslim interests should be safeguarded and their culture and traditions protected before full power, under a Western democratic system, was handed over to the majority in the subcontinent. The burning question was the type of electorates that were to be introduced

in India. Would it be joint electorates for all, or separate electorates for the minorities, especially for the largest minority, the Muslims, who were one-fourth of the population? Father, strongly believing in separate electorates for his co-religionists, had been advocating the cause fervently, the Aligarh group were working for it wholeheartedly and the moderate school of thought in every province favoured it. He used to point out that the Muslims in the Punjab alone were indebted to the Hindus to the extent of over a crore and a half of rupees, and candidates returned through joint electorates would not be able to stand up for Muslims' rights and interests. With three-fourth Hindus and one-fourth only of their co-religionists forming the electorate who would be returning them, they would have to sing to the tune of their Hindu voters in order to retain their seats.

The two basic principles of all modern Western systems of government of a democratic type were (*i*) that the executive of a country should be responsible to the legislature and (*ii*) that the legislature should be truly representative of the people. The democratic constitutions of the world had been built on such firm foundations. It was essential that the system of electorates for a democratic constitution for any country should be formed so that it gave the fullest scope to rural representation of every section of the people. A legislature that did not satisfy this fundamental test could not be regarded as democratic. In Western countries, where electorates on the basis of nationalism had been working, there were homogeneous communities, bound together by religion and race. The creation of legislatures in such countries would, therefore, be representatives of the people. Father used to say that a careful analysis of the demand of the minorities for separate electorates did not in any way go against the basic principles of democracy. It was true that this type of electorate was not known in Western democratic constitutions, but nowhere in any Western country did such racial and religious differences exist as in India. Was there anywhere in the world in which one part of a nation considered another untouchable, or a section of the people was known as depressed classes?

Lord Morley, during the House of Lords debate on the Minto-Morley Reforms Scheme on 23 February 1909, said that

> separate communal electorates formed an integral part of Cyprus and Bohemian constitutions during the pre-war period. In Ireland, which is a very small country, the island had to be divided into two parts, each placed under a separate parliament, in spite of a strong protest by the majority of the Irish people.

Statesmanship demanded that sound principles, like giving full representation to all communities living in one country, must be followed when circumstances so required. In a great subcontinent like India, with a population of over 400 million people divided into various communities and belonging to different races, diverse religions, and following multifarious social systems, a purely territorial electorate would omit too many considerations. The authors of the Reforms Scheme of 1909, in para 62 of their report, write:

> The arch on which the edifice of self-government must be raised, for we have no intention that our reform should result merely in the transfer of powers from a bureaucracy to an oligarchy, territorial electorates pure and undiluted would result in creating an oligarchy and the legislature brought into existence by such a system would not be really representative of the population.

Hence the Minto-Morley Reforms Scheme, aware of the conditions prevailing in India, had accepted the principle of separate electorates for all the communities living in India.

The Indian National Congress was working everywhere for the acceptance of joint electorates by the British Government. A number of Muslim members of the Congress were also sincerely and earnestly working within that organization for joint electorates, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mr Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr Ansari, and Mr Asaf Ali amongst them. The Congress propaganda for joint electorates on a national basis was being strengthened in parliamentary circles in England by prominent Hindu leaders who made frequent visits

there. In fact, they had managed to secure the support of a number of leading labour members of the British Parliament.

During our visit to Simla, Father came to know that proposals for the new Reforms Scheme were being discussed and formulated in London, and as Congress propaganda would be harmful to the Muslim cause if nothing was done to counteract it, he was perturbed. He got in touch with Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad and others and it was decided that a deputation should wait on the Viceroy. Father invited the leaders to stay with him at his house, *The Seven Oaks*, and we were asked to leave Simla earlier than was originally planned. The Muslim League deputation met the Viceroy and impressed upon him the importance of separate electorates for Muslims in any new reforms that were to be given to India. Unfortunately, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk became seriously ill and died at our house in Simla.

Soon after our return from Simla, Shah Nawaz's proposal was accepted by the elders and I was formally engaged to him. In November 1907, we again went to stay in Lahore, where my sister Geti and I attended Victoria Girls' High School, and after spending the winter there, we returned to the village. Rashid and Rafi were due to leave for England in August 1908, and we did not go to the hills that year. I was very fond of Rafi and I could not bear the idea of separation for five years, and on account of weeping and fretting for weeks beforehand I had a temperature of 105 degrees when Uncle and he left for Bombay in September 1908. Nearly two years later, Bashir joined them in England.

Father had organized and was running a number of welfare and nation-building organizations and he had been appointed to most important government committees. He was a Fellow of the Punjab University and a member of the Senate. During his Fellowship of the University and his membership of the Lahore Municipal Committee, he contributed a great deal to the promotion and formulation of education policies, and worked for the improvement of the general condition of the city of Lahore. Father used to work very hard, sitting at the table with

junior lawyers until the early hours of the morning, preparing important criminal cases, jury trials, and involved inheritance and property cases, and his practice was increasing by leaps and bounds. He would spend hours scanning the Civil List to find out the departments in which Muslims had not yet been given their due place. British officials were invited to meals and requested to promote the interests of the Muslim minority. Both Shah Din and Father used to encourage and even finance promising young Muslims so that they could make good careers and go abroad. Boys of the family were given financial assistance to qualify for special branches of the services and were advised at every step. Father helped not only Muslims but also young men of other communities whenever and wherever he could.

In the summer of 1908, Father had been appearing in an important case, when, on his return from the High Court after a hard day's work, he received a telegram from the Government of India asking him to oblige them by proceeding at once to Simla for important consultations. He had already accepted a large fee for the case and his arguments had just concluded, so he did not know what to do. However, he decided to leave at once and briefed a good lawyer to carry on the case in his absence. Four Muslim leaders from all over India had been invited, including Sir Ali Imam. All the other three Muslims agreed to accept joint electorates for civic and legislative bodies in the coming reforms, but Father emphatically refused to do so. The Government of India was keen that the Muslims should accept joint electorates and they spared no effort to make Father agree. On his return home, he wrote to a large number of Muslim leaders, including the Aga Khan and Syed Ameer Ali in England, asking them to work hard to prevent the Hindus persuading the British Government to agree to joint electorates. Throughout that winter, Father worked ceaselessly and had a large number of resolutions passed by the District and Provincial branches of the Muslim League in support of separate electorates and had hundreds of telegrams and letters sent to the Viceroy, to the Cabinet Ministers in London, and to prominent members

of different political parties in Great Britain. Every possible Muslim organization was approached by him and asked to voice its sentiments with regard to this all-important question. Public meetings were organized and addressed, and articles written in leading papers in support of separate electorates. Father had undertaken a country-wide campaign, and there was not a single province where he did not encourage his co-workers to carry on a strong agitation in support of separate electorates. We used to say in the house that, sleeping or waking, Father would talk of separate electorates as the very life of the Muslim nation, and he would not rest content until these formed the basis of the future constitution for India. By the grace of God, his efforts were crowned with success and the Minto-Morley Reforms Scheme announced in 1909 provided separate electorates for all tiers of further reforms for the minorities in India, including the Muslims. Can I ever forget Father's happiness on the day when the Scheme was announced? There were tears of joy in his eyes and he said: 'The separate entity of the Muslim nation in the subcontinent has been established for all times, and I thank the Almighty God in blessing our efforts with success.' The foundations of Pakistan had been laid, and Muslims were recognized as a separate nation in the Indian subcontinent. Most of the Muslims in India were realizing that, had it not been for Father's ceaseless efforts and his unswerving assertion of the separate entity of the Muslim nation, they would not have succeeded in securing separate electorates, and they appreciated his service deeply. When Father was later asked to preside at the All-India Urdu Conference held at Poona in 1911, people went crazy over him. He was taken through the streets of the town in a large procession in a horse-drawn carriage, but the students insisted on taking the horses away and pulling the carriage themselves. Bombay, too, gave him a rousing and memorable reception.

The Indian National Congress was not satisfied with the power given to the people under the Minto-Morley Reforms Scheme and they started agitating for further reforms. Mr Gandhi

took the lead and a civil disobedience movement was in the offing.

When King George V visited India as Prince of Wales, the Princes gave him two lac rupees to spend on education in the Punjab. The Governor called a meeting of the prominent citizens of Lahore and consulted them about the best use that could be made of this sum of money. Father and Shah Din both explained the immediate necessity for establishing a good public school or college for girls, on the lines of the Aitchison Chiefs College that had been set up for boys. A committee was formed with Father as Secretary, and the citizens of Lahore were asked to contribute towards the fund. On 10 December 1908, a girls' school was opened on Hall Road, Lahore, and Geti and I joined it that very day. There were only eleven girls who attended, and my name was the first entered in the register. A Miss Edgley, who had been the Head Mistress of Alexandria School at Amritsar and had spent nearly twenty years in India, was appointed Principal. She was an exceptional educationist and knew more about our way of life and customs than we did. A Miss Western, who belonged to a well-known English family, had also come to Lahore with the intention of opening a girls' school. As soon as the Committee learnt about it, they approached her and she agreed to join the new school, which had been named Queen Mary School. Admission was difficult; entrance was restricted to girls of good family and applications had to be passed by a committee of which the Governor was Chairman. In spite of this, numbers increased within a few months, and girls form other Indian states as well as from well-known families in Lahore and other districts joined the institution.

My impressions of that first day can never be forgotten. The day began with a twenty-minute moral lesson, and duty to God was the subject taken up. Then followed duty to parents, brothers and sisters, to other members of the family and to neighbours, and our duty as citizens. Another honorary teacher, Miss Sykes, sister of Sir Percy Sykes, British Ambassador to Iran, joined the staff. Our Principal's aim was to provide a cultural background

and at the same time prepare us for our vocation in life. Miss Edgley drew up a syllabus for all-round studies and refused to prepare us for mere university examinations. Her idea was to have a separate diploma of the school, on the lines of the Isable Thournburn College at Lucknow. We were made to study a number of subjects: Arabic, Sanskrit, English Literature, and Home Economics, including how to entertain guests of every status, a subject that was not included in any curriculum at that time. Other than languages, music, painting, and cooking were also taught and she tried to mould the characters of the students in such a manner that they would enter life fully prepared for the duties which they had to undertake. History, geography and politics were my favourite subjects and I was very fond of literature, especially poetry.

Uncle Shah Din had been appointed a permanent judge of the Punjab Chief Court in 1908. Asghari was admitted to the school in the beginning of 1909 and Uncle Shah Din's family came to live in Lahore permanently. Asghari and I used to spend most of our time together, and as our houses were not far from each other we would usually have meals together in one house or the other. If Uncle was free, he used to read to us some of the articles he had written in his younger days and had published in various papers.

Father was nominated to the Punjab Legislative Council in 1909. We visited Kashmir for the first time that August and the drive from Rawalpindi to Srinagar on tongas driven by two horses was a completely new experience. The journey used to take three days; the nights were spent in *dak* bungalows on the way, and horses were changed every eight miles. For over two hundred miles one had to go into the heart of the hills, alongside the river Jhelum for most of the way, and then suddenly one entered a huge valley with high mountains surrounding it. The picturesque valley had two lakes, the Wooler and the Dal, and Mughal emperors had built gardens on the banks of the latter near the capital Srinagar. The gardens were known as Shalamar, Nishat, and Nasim Baghs. The Dal lake was about twelve miles in circumference and a large number of small boats, known as

shikaras, plied on it. The Wooler lake was much larger and was situated twenty miles away from Srinagar. The Jhelum river which ran through the town of Srinagar was crowded with wooden boats, like small houses, which visitors hired to live in while they visited various beautiful places in the valley, like Achhabal, Gandarbal and others, spending a couple of days in different well-known places. The Mughals had built a garden in Achhabal where one could picnic. Both Shalamar and Nishat gardens, beautifully planned, were built with terraces, tanks, and fountains in the Mughal style. The scenery round the valley, especially in the hills, resembled that of Switzerland, and Kashmir was decidedly one of the most beautiful places on the face of the earth. I was thrilled with it all and won a prize in the holiday essay competition of the school by writing about a night scene in Srinagar. We used to play cards when the two families spent evenings together, and Father and I often used to play halma after dinner on his free evenings.

My younger brother, Muhammad Iqbal Shafi, was born on 11 September 1910. Father bought a house on Mozang Road that year and named it *Iqbal Manzil*, and we shifted to Lahore permanently.

The elders decided that my marriage should take place in April 1911. I felt miserable about it, as I loved my studies and did not wish to get married at the age of fifteen. Shah Nawaz had promised that I would be allowed to continue my studies as long as possible after marriage. I was keen to finish my education and then go abroad for further studies. Uncle Shah Din told me one evening that he would be delighted to send Asghari to a university in England if Father were to agree to let me go too, and we could go abroad together. When my grandfathers insisted on my becoming engaged, the idea had to be abandoned.

Since the age of twelve, I had become a companion in the house for my father, and he used to talk to me of his political work and would often read his speeches and statements to me. He would discuss the political situation and other topics, welcome comments on the salient points, and while doing so

trained me to take part in the political life of the country. It was his greatest wish to prepare me for work in the political sphere. He always regretted the fact that he could not send me abroad to get a degree from an English university, and he tried to make up for it in guiding my studies at home and suggesting suitable books to help me understand politics as a subject.

I was married to Mian Shah Nawaz on 14 April 1911. The trousseau was made according to the old traditions and the marriage was celebrated in Baghbanpura in the old style. In fact, when I asked that beggars should not be allowed to enter the house during the feast, my request was brushed aside by my grandmother. Allama Iqbal, who had been a great friend of Shah Nawaz since college days, wrote a 'Tarikh' on the wedding. For a young girl marriage means a complete change in her way of life, but fortunately for me, when my wedding took place at the age of fifteen, I did not have to manage a separate house or live with my husband's people for a couple of years. I had been my father's favourite child, brought up with every possible care and every wish fulfilled, so adjusting myself to my new life took some time.

Within two or three years of his return from England, Shah Nawaz had lost his father, youngest brother, wife and second son, and his two living relations were a mother and a brother, named Muhammad Asad, who had married his cousin, Zubaida Khanum, just one year before my marriage. She was two years older than I and we were good friends. Asad, who had been ailing since childhood, fell ill soon after his marriage and recovered only after six months of serious illness. It was extremely hot in Lahore in June 1911, and because my younger brother, Iqbal, was only ten months old Mother decided to take him to Abbottabad. Uncle Shah Din's family and ours rented a large house, and two months after my marriage we all went to Abbottabad, accompanied by Asad and his wife. Uncle Shah Din, Father, and Shah Nawaz stayed in Lahore for their Court work until the end of July. After one month in Abbottabad, Asad became ill again, had a severe heart attack and the doctors advised us to take him back to Lahore, but he could not be

moved for nearly two months. Asad was dangerously ill for nearly seven months before he died at the age of twenty-five, leaving a young widow and a twenty-day-old daughter behind him. The constant heart attacks throughout his brother's protracted illness, resulting ultimately in his death, had been a nerve-racking experience for my husband. He had spared neither time nor money to save the life of his only surviving brother, but it was to no avail. With a heart-broken mother, a young widow, and a fatherless child to take care of, Shah Nawaz had a complete nervous breakdown. Nine months after our marriage he collapsed and was ill for nearly four years. He lost a great deal of weight and could not get over the constant memory of the repeated heart attacks which his brother had suffered.

I continued my studies until June 1912, by which time Queen Mary School had become Queen Mary College and a spacious new building had been erected on Durand Road. Miss Edgley, the Principal, took a special interest in my education and gave me a mother's care and affection. When my first child was about to be born, I sometimes used to find a letter full of well thought-out advice placed in my desk. In one of these letters, she wrote that it was for me to make my child what I wanted it to be by thinking of all that was beautiful, of all that was true, and of all that was worth having. Throughout that difficult period, she helped me more than a real mother could have done.

My first child, a daughter, was born on 12 October 1912. As I held my first baby in my arms, I could not get over the joy of having her as my very own, brought into the world by me, and when she opened her big eyes I saw a reflection of myself in them. When at an early age Mumtaz started writing poetry with a sad strain in it, I knew that it was the result of that period of sorrow that I had gone through when she was about to be born.

After her birth, I continued to go to the College for one year to study Arabic and do some needlework. We worked on an Irish lace table-centre, embroidered with the five rivers of the Punjab and lotus flowers, which was sent to Queen Mary on behalf of the College girls. After reluctantly leaving College, I

continued to take an interest in it and organized an Old Girls' Association, with a life-membership and a special gold badge, and had an old girls' magazine published. I was elected the first Secretary of the Association and became the first Editor of the College magazine. These three and half years at College were without doubt the happiest days of my life.

2

TOWARDS THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN AND THE COUNTRY'S FREEDOM

The Delhi Darbar was held in early 1912 for the coronation of King George V. The capital of India was shifted from Calcutta to Delhi, and the partition of Bengal was annulled. Father attended the Darbar and was elected a member of the Viceroy's Imperial Council. He was offered a judgeship in the Madras High Court in September 1912, which he refused.

After Father's election to the Imperial Council in 1912, our life, which had been confined to the province of the Punjab, took a new turn and we began moving in wider, all-India circles. This gave us opportunities of coming into contact with leaders, both men and women, in all fields of activity. The Muslim League Council in 1910 had recommended a change in its constitution, discussions had gone on and ultimately in 1913 it was decided during the Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League at Lucknow, held under the presidentship of Muhammad Shafi, that the goal would be:

> ...the attainment, under the aegis of the British Crown, of a system of self-government suitable to India through constitutional means, by bringing about, amongst others, a steady reform of the existing system of administration by promoting national unity, by fostering public spirit amongst the people of India, and by cooperation with other communities for the said purpose.

It is interesting to note that, even in 1913, when passing this resolution, the League was not thinking of a model of a western form of government for India. Father said in his speech:

> The adoption of the alternative proposal by some friends, that the League should set up a colonial form of government as its ultimate goal—this is, in my opinion, inadmissible as well as politically unsound. The political conditions, internal and external, prevailing in the British colonies, have no analogy whatsoever with that obtaining in India, and I am in entire accord with my friend, Mr Jinnah, in thinking that the adoption of any course other than the one proposed by the Council would be absolutely unwise.

The Muslim League also passed the following resolution in the same session:

> The All India Muslim League places on record its firm belief that the future development and progress of the people of India depend on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities, and hopes that leaders of both sides will periodically meet together to find a *modus operandi* of joint and concerted action in questions of public good.

The idea of the establishment of a Muslim University at Aligarh took shape and most provincial leaders started working for it actively. A session of the Muslim Educational Conference was held in Lahore and His Highness the Aga Khan, who was leading the movement, presided over it. My father organized the work in the Punjab, and during the session most of the prominent Muslims stayed at our house, *Iqbal Manzil*. We had to go to the village and vacate the house in Lahore for the purpose. People were enchanted by the Aga Khan, who was a very handsome young man at the time, and Muslims of the Punjab contributed generously to the Muslim University Fund. We worked amongst the Muslim women for the success of the campaign. During the next few years, the constant contacts between the Aga Khan and my father, who held similar views, brought them increasingly close to each other and Father

practically became the right-hand man of the Aga Khan in India. His Highness always valued Father's sincere advice, and because of the similarity of ideas and ways of working they became staunch friends. Both believed in achieving things through work on well-organized, constructive lines, striving within the Government as well as outside, amongst the people in the country. Their strong belief in achieving independence, with Muslim interest well safeguarded in every sphere, was an ideal for which they were ready to fight on all fronts.

Uncle Rashid and Rafi returned from England in February and May 1913, and we all spent the summer in Simla, where Father had bought a house. Throughout Shah Nawaz's illness, I nursed him alone, and relations and friends were rather surprised to find that I, a child, despite being the pampered daughter of rich parents, had diligently devoted myself to the nursing of my husband single-handed.

I had been writing articles for the papers in 1914 and also started writing a story which was published piecemeal in a women's paper named *Khatoon*, of which the proprietor and editor was Fatima Begum, a paper which was later known as *Sharif Bibi*. It was the story of a young girl who, facing life boldly, worked for social reform and educational progress. In all, it took me one year to write. The story was later published in 1915 as a book named *Husn Ara Begum* by the Paisa Akhbar Press.

When the First World War was declared on 14 August 1914, we were in Simla. A number of women's work parties were organized by different institutions in Lahore at Government House and other places, and on our return from Simla we took an active part in preparing articles required for the soldiers. The whole of the subcontinent felt that it was a great opportunity for the people to show to the British and their Allies that they were staunchly behind them in helping them to win the War. The Indian National Congress, the All-India Muslim League and other organizations supported the Allied cause. When Turkey joined Germany, there was great apprehension in Government circles that Muslim cooperation might be curtailed, but it made

very little difference, and Muslim soldiers did not hesitate to fight in Gallipoli and other places and stood faithfully by the British Government. Bashir returned from England in 1914, during the War, and the ship in which he travelled was chased by the *Emden*.

The late Begum of Bhopal, realizing the urgent need for an all-India organization for the awakening of Muslim women, convened a meeting at Aligarh in 1915 and Aunt Zebunnisa and Mother were invited to attend it. Unfortunately, Mother could not go, but my aunt and Asghari attended it, and an All-India Muslim Ladies' Conference was brought into existence with Nafis Begum, wife of Haji Musa Sherwani of Aligarh, as Secretary and the Begum of Bhopal as President. The next year's annual session was also held at Aligarh; Aunt Zebunnisa was asked to preside, and we all attended. Asghari and I spoke on different resolutions and we were delighted to meet a number of outstanding Muslim ladies from different parts of India—Begum Abdullah, wife of Sheikh Abdullah, Secretary of the All-India Muslim Educational Conference, who was in charge of the Aligarh Girls' School; Miss Zey Khey Sheen, the well-known poetess; Begum Mahmood, wife of the late Mr Justice Syed Mahmood; Begum Aftab Ahmad, with her daughter Zohra Begum; and Abru Begum, sister of Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, among others.

My mother's elder brother, Abdul Hamid, a District and Session Judge, died in 1915 and I lost a ten-month-old brother named Akhtar soon after him. Uncle Rashid and Nawab Maula Bakhsh's daughter, Marzia Khanum, were married in Simla in September of that year. My elder brother Rafi's engagement to Asghari, daughter of Uncle Shah Din, and her brother Bashir's engagement to my sister, Geti Ara, were announced in the beginning of 1916, and they were married in November 1917. I was blessed in September 1916, with another daughter, who was named Nasim Jahan.

Sitting at dinner one evening in 1916, when the Germans were succeeding everywhere and the Allies were retreating, we were discussing the situation when Father smiled and said: 'The

Allies will win the war in two years.' At that time most of us thought that his statement was wishful thinking. When the Allies had won the War, I reminded Father of that incident and asked him how he had managed to predict their success when the destinies of the Allies had been at such a low ebb. He replied: 'Child, you also will be able to read the writing on the wall when you have been in political life as many years as I have.' This was not the only time when he foretold outstanding events, and how often I have been reminded of the truth of Father's statement from 1948 onwards! Unfortunately, politics cannot be learnt in schools and colleges, and in advanced countries, young men and women acquire political knowledge and experience by working with, and becoming apprentices of, outstanding politicians. It is with such personalities, who spend their lives in politics and make it their career, working from the lowest rung of the ladder and achieving the highest through their own courage and wisdom, that politics are learnt. The older the politician, the greater becomes his foresight, skill, and administrative ability. Politics is a subject that has to be learnt through years of daily travail. For building a nation and for administering departments, initiative, imagination and ability are required, and to work successfully as ministers and chief ministers, years have to be spent in legislatures and administrative spheres. Having worked on District Boards or on a few committees here and there is not sufficient qualification for a Cabinet post.

From my childhood, I had been a staunch believer in Islamic mysticism and in love for the Highest. I did not know Persian well, but contacts with Nawab Maula Bakhsh's family improved my Persian. My husband was very fond of the language, and during his illness I used to read Persian mystic poetry to him, especially *Diwan-i-Hafiz*, which was his favourite book of verse. My love for mysticism increased and *Ishq-i-Haqiqi*, the highest mystic achievement, became the ideal to strive for throughout my life. My thirst for truth made me study a number of religions, and the more I read the scriptures of others, the more I admired and loved the simplicity and rationalism of Islam. This careful

reading strengthened my love for my own religion from day to day, and made me search for knowledge of the real Islam. Without a careful analysis of the tenets of one's religion, comparing the opinions of different scholars and translators, judging everything with an open mind, one cannot understand it and love it as one should. Father had a very simple faith and he never discussed religion. In fact, if ever a discussion was started about it he would abstain from taking part. He upheld the ordinary traditions in everyday life and would read one or two pages of the Holy Quran every morning. I know that I inherited a simple, strong belief and staunch faith in Providence from my father.

I used to worry about Islam, such a simple religion, having been placed in the hands of ignorant people during the dark ages, especially in the rural areas. I recall that in my childhood in our village I had heard people say to the mother of an idiot or a semi-intelligent child: 'Do not worry, send him to a mosque and make him a *maulvi*.' Such persons had made Islam stereotyped; its tenets were often misinterpreted and misquoted. The immediate requirement was to have schools and colleges of theology, where intelligent persons could be given the necessary education and training to secure diplomas and be placed in charge of religious and holy places, or set to impart religious education in public institutions.

A young group of Muslims, headed by Mr M.A. Jinnah, stood for unity with the Hindus on the basis of joint electorates, and were moving heaven and earth to make the Muslim League agree to it. In the Punjab, Mian Fazl-i-Hussain, Allama Iqbal, Chaudhri Shahabuddin, Pir Tajuddin and their Muslim League were supporting the Jinnah group. A cleavage between the two groups was inevitable, one led by Mr Jinnah, with the Ali brothers—Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar and Maulana Shaukat Ali Jauhar—, Abul Kalam Azad, Mian Fazl-i-Hussain and others and the second consisting of Muhammad Shafi, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoolah, Sir Abdur Rahim, Maulvi Rafi-ud-Din Ahmad, the Nawab of Dhaka, Syed Raza Ali and others. Father was the elected president of the All-India Muslim League at the time

and he strongly opposed the idea of national unity based on joint electorates without safeguarding Muslim rights and interests beforehand. He had always been very apprehensive of the Muslims losing their national entity in the Hindu fold. He used to say that Islam was the only religion that had withstood the Hindu onslaught and was on the increase. In spite of such movements in India as 'Shudhi' and 'Sanghatan', that were helping Hinduism to absorb members of other religions, like Buddhists, Islam continued to flourish. A religion like Buddhism, born in India itself, had been almost eliminated and Hindus were trying to do the same with the Sikhs, through intermarriage besides other means. Father believed that in any form of self-government based on the Western type of democracy, the very survival of the Muslims depended on separate electorates with proper safeguards. The so-called progressives of the joint electorate bloc gained the upperhand in the central organization and Fazl-i-Hussain's group carried on propaganda against Father's policy of proper safeguards before national unity could be forged as retrograde and reactionary. Articles were published openly against him, meetings were held by the rival Punjab Muslim League and every possible effort was made to throw Father into the background. He was considered an obstacle in the path of unity between the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League, and there were open fights on platforms and in large meetings. Father staunchly believed in giving a lead if the national interests so demanded, and would not be influenced by misguided public opinion, for unless a leader had such courage, he was no leader at all. Standing with even a handful of persons, he walked the road which he considered the right highway for his nation, and irrespective of the strongest opposition he would continue to follow it conscientiously. How true is the saying that truth always triumphs in the end! During every crisis within the next year or two, Shafi's followers would invariably increase and the opposition dwindle. Of such calibre were they—the pioneers of freedom for Muslim India.

A joint meeting of the Congress Committee and the League Council was held in Calcutta in October 1916. The scheme of reforms jointly chalked out by the Congress and the League was referred to the annual sessions of both organizations at Lucknow in December 1916. According to the agreement arrived at between the two organizations, known as the Lucknow Pact, the Muslim majority representations in Bengal and the Punjab were reduced by 13 per cent and 15 per cent respectively, the two major provinces in the subcontinent where majority rule would have given real power to the Muslims. The Congress-League agreement was submitted to His Majesty's Government for consideration. The Congress and the League held their annual sessions on 18 July 1917, in Bombay; a Committee of Nineteen was formed and it was decided to send a deputation of four persons, including Mr Jinnah, to England to explain and to promote the scheme of constitutional reforms adopted by the two great organizations, but the Government of India refused permission to let them proceed to England.

When Mr Jinnah became the President of the All-India Muslim League, he charge-sheeted Father and called for an explanation from the affiliated Punjab Muslim League. It was said that, under the circumstances, the second Muslim League (Fazl-i-Hussain's) represented the true interests and aspirations of the Muslim public of the Punjab. Father replied to all the charges, and brought forward counter-charges, which were ignored; the Punjab Muslim League was disaffiliated in favour of the Fazl-i-Hussain League, and the so-called group of 'reactionaries' were thrown out of the Council of the All-India Muslim League. Father decided not to be a party to what he called 'the killing of the Muslim nation as a separate entity with our own hands'. His apprehensions were proving well-founded: unity was being brought about by surrendering majority rule in a democratic form of government in the only two provinces that mattered for the Muslims, the Punjab and Bengal. In all my life, I had never seen Father so depressed as when he read the provisions of the Lucknow Pact. He decided to stake his all, and work for the organization of an all-India group that would not

submit to these proposals. With unity in the offing between the Congress and the League, and the central office of the All-India Muslim League having been captured by the unity group, he yet refused to give up his principles, which were not only an article of faith with him but were, according to him, the very life-blood of the Muslim nation. Father resigned from the membership of the All-India Muslim League in 1917, after the Lucknow Pact had been signed. Almost all the outstanding leaders of public opinion in the Punjab, leading lawyers and prominent citizens, were behind Father, and meetings held by him were largely attended by local Muslim leaders. In every province, Muslim leaders who belonged to Shafi's school of thought were approached to mobilize opinion in their own circles to secure a majority in favour of separate electorates for Muslim majority rule in Bengal and the Punjab, and they started working hard.

The Jinnah group was leaving no stone unturned to come to a settlement, first with the Indian National Congress and then, on the basis of a joint demand of the Hindus and Muslims together, with the British Government as well. Had this succeeded then, it would have deprived the Muslims of all those necessary safeguards which later became Mr Jinnah's fourteen points, and the history of this subcontinent would have been completely different.

Father was dubbed a British stooge, was given other such epithets, and the criticism hurled at him was that he was a reactionary sacrificing the freedom of his country for the sake of the British. One would like to know why those who stood for separate electorates for Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal, and for securing safeguards for the Muslims in a democratic form of government with an unalterable Hindu majority before a united demand for freedom could be put forward, should be called 'anti-nationalists' and 'reactionaries', while others who were prepared to sacrifice the separate entity of their own nation were called 'progressives'.

Father's opposition to the Lucknow Pact made him very unpopular with the Nationalist Muslims and Congress Hindus. The *Comrade*, the *Zamindar* and other Nationalist papers wrote

articles against him. The *Comrade* said that Shafi was 'the clinging ivy round the sturdy British oak', and we younger members of the family felt perturbed. How was this epithet justified when Father was not in any kind of need, when his practice was at such a height that people used to say that Shafi's income was greater than any other lawyer in the north-west of India? He did not want offices; he had been offered judgeships and had refused them. When Jinnah, Sir Ali Imam, and others had agreed to accept joint electorates in 1908, Father's was the lone voice raised against it. He did not wish to be offered grants of land, and if anybody ever mentioned such a thing he would feel offended. Why, then, should people dub him a British stooge was something which baffled us. If Shafi had been a yes-man of the British, why did he not agree to joint electorates when the British Government had been so very keen that the Muslims should accept them during the formation of the Minto-Morley Reforms Scheme? He had gone so far as to say that the Muslims would accept joint electorates over his dead body. Had he accepted them then, joint electorates would have been the basis of all reforms, and the very foundations of Pakistan would have been undermined. As Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman had rightly said in his book *Pathway to Pakistan*:

> Sir Mohammad Shafi, another great patriot and a staunch Muslim Leaguer... To him goes the credit, when President of the Muslim League in 1913, of bringing about a healthier change in the Constitution of the League by modifying 'loyalty to the Government' to 'loyalty to the Crown', which in those days was positively a very important and bold change. After a few years he became the Law Member in the Government of India, which office he held from 1919 to 1924. Sir Mohammad Shafi was a staunch supporter of separate electorates and, to my mind, the only leader who throughout his career never wavered in his faith in the utility of that system. He had the courage to form a separate league when, in March 1927, Mr Jinnah accepted joint electorates in the Delhi Peace Conference, and later on got the principle approved in the Calcutta league session presided over by Sir Mohammed Yaqub.

Even Mian Azim Hussain in the biography of his father, *Fazl-i-Hussain*, cannot help but acknowledge that 'most of the work in connection with Muslim demands was the result of the efforts of Mian Muhammad Shafi and Mian Shah Din'.

The achievement of independence for the whole of this subcontinent is the sum total of the combined efforts of all the leading personalities, belonging to every section, who worked day and night for the people of this country. Safeguards for the Muslim nation and separate electorates for them were the ideals of many outstanding Muslim leaders, especially my father, and had these persons not stood up for their convictions, where would the Muslims of this subcontinent be today? Pakistan, achieved on the basis of a separate entity by securing separate electorates and proper safeguards for the Muslim nation, is the best answer to this question. Let students of history pause and appreciate the services of those who served the nation loyally and whole-heartedly throughout their lives.

Mother and Auntie invited the Muslim Ladies' Conference to hold its annual session in Lahore in March 1917. Asghari and I organized the work and a large number of Muslim ladies from different provinces attended it. The Conference was held at Faridkot House and Abru Begum, sister of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, presided. I proposed a resolution against polygamy which was passed unanimously and became a standing resolution of the Conference. We had organized a volunteer corps of young girls, dressed in uniforms with badges, and they took charge of the guests, decorated the hall, made arrangements for the meetings and transport, and saw to other details, all of which was highly praised. As I got down from the platform after finishing my speech on the resolution about polygamy, an old lady from the audience, with tears running down her cheeks, came and embraced me and said that she was proud to be alive on a day when such troubles and difficulties of women were being discussed on responsible platforms. Abru Begum's brilliant presidential address and her manner of speaking were a beacon of light for all of us. The anti-polygamy resolution brought about a storm of protest and a number of articles

appeared in the papers calling me all sorts of names. Uncle Shah Din asked Bashir to reply to some of them and I had a pamphlet printed and distributed, explaining why such a resolution had to be passed. My mother presided at the annual session of this Conference in 1921.

We had been going to Simla each summer for four years and in 1917 we decided to visit Kashmir again with Uncle Shah Din's family. It was a very enjoyable trip and this time we travelled by car. When we were all reciting poetry to each other on a picnic with the family in Nasim Bagh, my daughter Tazi, then over four years of age, suddenly came out with a line of her own. Uncle Shah Din had become very fond of her and she used to spend an hour or two a day with him on holidays. Tazi went straight to him and repeated the line. He remarked that she had inherited the art of writing poetry from their branch of the family, and prophesied that one day she would be the sixth generation of poets in her father's family. One ancestor, Mian Qadir Bakhsh, was a renowned scholar and poet both in Urdu and Persian, and a noted mathematician. He was placed in charge of the Sikh arsenal by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and appointed a General in the Sikh army. Two cannons, one placed before Windsor Castle and another which used to be in front of the Lahore Museum, were cast under his direction and bear his name. God had given me Tazi as a daughter at the age of sixteen and half and I was devoting most of my time to her upbringing. I had taught her a number of poems and she used to recite them charmingly as a little child. She had inherited an exceptionally good memory from her father and had learnt the whole *namaz* by the age of five without a single mistake. Nawab Abdullah Khan of Hyderabad, who was a great friend of my father, had come to see him, and Shah Nawaz made Tazi recite the full *namaz* before him. He was surprised and very much impressed and he later sent the child a gold and turquoise pendant as a present. Tazi used to recite poems rather well and people would insist on her giving them a poem or two whenever there was a function in the house. She had written a poem in English at the age of seven, which was published in the Queen Mary College

magazine, and she went on composing and was improving from day to day.

While the Unity Group was working for the acceptance of their demands, Communalist Hindus, thinking that they were ultimately going to be virtual rulers in a democratic set-up of the western type in India, started provoking minor incidents, and troubles began in Muslim minority provinces. Communal riots were breaking out every now and then and tension between the two communities was increasing from day to day. In the Punjab, meetings were held by the United Punjabi Unity Group, one of which was held in Bradlaugh Hall, under the presidentship of Mian Fazl-i-Hussain. These were attended mostly by Hindus and Sikhs, and most of the Muslim intelligentsia refused to raise their voices for unity on the basis of the Lucknow Pact.

When Mr Edwin Montague was appointed Secretary of State for India, he decided to visit the subcontinent and arrived here on 10 November 1917. The Nationalists in India, including Mr Jinnah, were jubilant on Montague's appointment and were expecting great things from him. Mr Montague interviewed a large number of leaders of public opinion. Father explained to him at length the importance of safeguarding the Muslims' legitimate aspirations under a democratic form of government, but how could Mr Montague, who was totally opposed to separate electorates and was all for the Unity Pact, like Shafi's talk? History records that the 1916 apostle of unity, Mr Muhammad Ali Jinnah, later became an advocate of the separate state of Pakistan because of the inhuman demands of the Hindus.

Unfortunately, the agitation carried on by the Home Rule League, organized by Mrs Annie Besant early in 1917 and joined by Mr Jinnah, was on lines which gave it a religious bias and the faith of the people was being exploited to secure constitutional objects. During her presidential address at Calcutta in 1917, Mrs Besant declared:

> Home Rule has become so intertwined with religion by prayers offered up in the great southern temples, sacred places of pilgrimage, and by spreading from there to village temples, and also by being preached up and down the country by *sadhus* and *sanyasis*.

Such agitation brought about a great deal of political consciousness amongst the Hindus and along with that a keen desire for the revival of their old religious customs, culture and civilization, and the regional language question came to the forefront. The obvious result was a division between Hindus and Muslims, and the policy followed by the Home Rule League, especially during the days when the feelings of a large number of Muslims were running high because of their opposition to the Lucknow Pact, did a great deal of harm. The religious appeal of the Home Rule League resulted in the breaking out of communal riots in several places. During the sessions of the All-India Muslim League in 1917, Sir Raza Ali strongly condemned the riot at Arrah and expressed great regret at the silence of responsible Hindu leaders about the occurrences there.

Father was elected President of the Bar Association in 1917 and Mian Shah Din was appointed acting Chief Justice of the Punjab Chief Court in 1917, the first Muslim to hold such a post in northern India. Unfortunately, within a month he became seriously ill with galloping consumption, and breathed his last on 2 July 1918. It was a terrible blow and left a void that nothing could fill, for of the two pillars of the Mian family one had fallen, and the grief lasted for years. For me, it was a great personal loss, as I was not only very fond of him as a person, but had always looked upon him as an ideal. Father was asked to take Shah Din's place in the Chief Court and the family tried its level best to persuade him, but he did not accept because of the political situation in the country. He felt that the fate of the Muslim nation was at stake. What others became aware of much later, Father had already realized, that the time was coming soon when the British would have to leave this subcontinent and that it was essential for the Muslims to learn to stand on

their own feet so that they should not become a prey to the majority. The Punjab Chief Court was raised to the status of a High Court in 1919.

People in India, having done all that they possibly could to help win the War, which ended in November 1918, were greatly disappointed to learn that the new Reforms Scheme which was being chalked out of the subcontinent fell far short of their expectations. If immediate Dominion Status could not be given, full responsibility in the provinces and limited power in the central administration could have been conceded, but instead of that a diarchical system of government, with most of the important portfolios reserved in the provinces and no responsible government whatsoever in the centre, was being proposed. Under the Treaty of Versailles, Turkey had been dismembered, and in spite of repeated Muslim requests for a lenient attitude towards the Turks, harsh treatment had been their fate. After having stood by the British throughout the War, if Muslim sentiments were to be so trampled underfoot, then why not join other nations in their fight for freedom? The Khilafat Movement began and Muslims, in disgust, started leaving India. The non-cooperation movement was started by Mr Gandhi all over the country, and he also began his march to Dandi.

In 1919, the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms Scheme was published, enfranchising 1.8 per cent of the population on the basis of property qualifications only. The Legislative Councils of the provinces were turned into large bodies of elected Assemblies. Nation-building departments—Education, Agriculture, Medical, and Public Health—were transferred and placed in the hands of ministers who were to be nominated from elected members of the Legislative Assemblies, but important departments like the services, administration, finance, revenue, and forests were reserved, and were to be placed in charge of the members of the Executive Councils who were to be nominated by the Governors as before. A bicameral legislature with direct elections was to be elected in the centre, and the two houses were to be known as the Council of State and the Central Legislative Assembly. No responsibility was

placed in the hands of the representatives of the people in the central administration, and the Executive Council of the Viceroy was to remain as it was, with the addition of two more Indian members. The publication of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms Scheme infuriated the people; largely-attended public meetings were held and strong resentment was voiced everywhere. National organizations met and refused to accept the Reforms; there was trouble all over the country, and people started getting out of control. There was open provocation and suddenly one or two Europeans were murdered in Lahore and Amritsar in March 1919. An emergency meeting was held by the Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, at Government House. Father was grieved to find that the European officials, especially the Governor, had become panicky, and he and other moderate leaders advised the Government to exercise restraint, show patience, and remain calm; that by so doing they might improve the situation. Sir Michael was in no mood to listen to such advice and took steps that worsened the situation. A large meeting was being held in Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar, at which speeches were being delivered by the leaders when the military arrived on the scene, and the public started growing restless. Instead of resorting to tear gas and other mild measures, the soldiers began firing indiscriminately, and a large number of innocent people were killed. This infuriated the masses and riots broke out in a number of towns. After the bloodshed in Jallianwala Bagh, common suffering made the Hindus and Muslims join hands for the first time in the history of British rule. They sat down to have food together, and in some places even drank water from the same glasses. Both sections pledged themselves to free India from domination. Martial Law was declared in the Punjab and the province was placed under military rule. Some of the British military officers committed great blunders, insulted members of good families and subjected them to humiliation; even some members of my own family met with indignities. A body called the Hunter Committee was appointed to investigate, and responsible citizens gave evidence before it. Father was asked to appear before the Committee, and

in his evidence he made it clear that the incidents were solely due to the British authorities having lost their heads over the resentment shown by the public against the unsatisfactory reforms given to India. If they had not been panicky and had acted with foresight and wisdom, things would not have got so much out of hand.

In 1919, the Indian National Congress session was held in Lahore when the famous civil disobedience resolution was passed. Pundit Moti Lal Nehru, his wife and youngest daughter, Betty, came to attend the session. Shah Nawaz took eight-year-old Tazi to see Punditji, and I gave a ladies' party to meet Mrs Nehru. Meanwhile, the elder daughter, Vijaya Lakshmi, had also arrived and I had the pleasure of meeting her for the first time at my house.

During the second elections to the Punjab Legislative Council, Father helped Fazl-i-Hussain to secure the seat reserved for the Punjab University against Shah Din's advice. Chaudhri Shahabuddin was leading an anti-Shafi campaign and an open letter was published by him in the daily *Zamindar*. We were all upset about it, because the things written in it were in bad taste, but the day after it was published Father sent for tea for a few guests in his office. I asked the butler who had come, as we were still in strict *purdah*. He replied that Chaudhri Shahabuddin and some others were there. We felt depressed and when Father came in, Uncle Rashid, Rafi and I asked him why, in spite of the nasty language used by these people, he was being so nice to them? Father smiled and said that, in politics, such matters were not given importance and 'a soft answer turneth away wrath'. Later on, when I worked with Sir Shahabuddin, who was always very kind to me, he said to me one day, with tears in his eyes: 'My child, I have always deplored the fact that I opposed your venerable father, who was a good and true Muslim.' A number of outstanding Muslims throughout the Punjab were Father's staunch followers, and his two outstanding friends were Maulvi Mahboob Alam and Khan Bahadur Ghulam Sadiq of Amritsar, father of Sheikh Sadiq Hassan. Shah Nawaz's great friends were mostly amongst the opposite section,

Dr Muhammad Iqbal, Pir Tajuddin, Mian Abdul Aziz, and Malik Barkat Ali. He himself, although believing in separate electorates, was more inclined towards their political views and often did not agree with Father's opinions.

I used to wonder why Muslims of different schools of thought could not cooperate with each other, as did the Hindus and Sikhs. Every school of thought could make a valuable contribution towards achieving real independence for the country, with safeguards for every section. Why should epithets be hurled at each other and general differences of opinion not be tolerated amicably by prominent Muslim leaders? One never found such malicious propaganda carried on against each other by Hindu papers, or heard of one party trying to upset the work of the other, whereas in Muslim papers one section was criticizing the other all the time. Healthy criticism might be a sign of progress and would ultimately make for success, but abuse thrown at those who were working sincerely according to their own ideas carried a nation nowhere. Father hated divisions within the Muslim nation, wanted to be friends with each and all, and could never tolerate intrigue of any type. He respected an enemy who opposed him openly, but he could not stand a so-called friend who worked against him behind his back. He used to say that a Muslim leader's greatest difficulty was that he had to fight on three fronts instead of the two that a Hindu or a Britisher had to face in the political sphere in India. Unfortunately, a section of the Muslims generally sprang up to oppose a successful leader and this was very disheartening for a sincere worker. Once, after a talk with Sir Malcolm Hailey, Governor of the Punjab, he returned home sad and depressed. He told us that Hailey had asked him a question:

> Shafi, why is it that when a British official or a Hindu or a Sikh leader comes to see me, they talk against outstanding personalities of other communities, but invariably when Muslims come for interviews, barring you, they talk mostly against persons of their own nation?

Could any nation wherein such jealousies were harboured against each other prosper? In 1933, when I was returning from London after attending the Third Round Table Conference, Dr Ansari, who was travelling by the same boat, said the same thing to me, and we both deplored such a sad state of affairs in our nation.

For nearly twelve years, Hindus and Muslims lived in an atmosphere of mutual cooperation and good will in the United Provinces because their legitimate claims had been accepted. Mr Chintamani, giving evidence before the Indian Reforms Committee in December 1919, said that the satisfaction of the legitimate claims and aspirations of the Muslims in the United Provinces had so much improved Hindu-Muslim relations that he and friends of the same school of thought had helped to have separate electorates introduced into the local bodies of that province. Throughout those years, the Opposition party amongst the Muslims had worked unremittingly to put a spoke in Father's wheel, but in spite of such strong opposition he was succeeding in his work. Genuine differences of opinion between the two groups were helping to bring greater political consciousness amongst the Muslims. He was working to retain separate electorates and to secure safeguards for Muslims, including majority rule in the two major provinces of Bengal and the Punjab and for the success of his mission cooperation with the British, as well as with the moderate Hindu section, was essential. The other group believed in national unity on the basis of the Lucknow Pact, and for them anyone who differed was a 'toady' and a 'reactionary'.

The Hunter Committee's report was published, and people said that Father had burnt his boats by giving such strong and unpalatable evidence against the British officials. Father used to say that if he ever accepted an office, it would only be a good portfolio in the Executive Council of the Viceroy, where he could serve the Muslims as well as the country to the best of his ability. As the foremost lawyer in the north-west of India and a leading figure in the politics of the country, he was playing an important role, especially in guarding the interests of his own

nation. Sir Ali Imam had taken Lord Sinha's place in the Viceroy's Executive Council and when his term of office expired, Sir Sankar Nayar was appointed. There were strong rumours of differences between him and the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford. Papers were talking of his pending resignation and were mentioning Shafi's name as his likely successor. After Shafi's appearance before the Hunter Committee, it was said all around that he had killed his chances of an appointment in the Executive Council. Would he swerve from the path of duty to his country, just for the sake of offices which meant nothing to him? His appointment as Education Member of the Executive Council which was suddenly announced in July 1919, was a great surprise to all.

Father's acceptance of an all-India office made a great change in our lives and most of Geti's time and mine was spent with our parents in Delhi and Simla. In December 1920, we accompanied Father to Calcutta, where we spent a whole month. The Suhrawardys, who had been great friends of our family, made all the arrangements, and we saw a good deal of each, other. Mr Abdullah and Mr Hassan Suhrawardy's children and ours became good friends. It was in that city that Father asked us to discard the veil and we went out to the New Market without *burqas* for the first time in our lives. Father used to relate the incident, saying that his family's coming out of seclusion cost him Rs 3000 in one day, as Mother did such a huge amount of shopping in the Market. Shafi was used to spending his life with his women-folk, and he did not like the idea of attending and arranging mixed functions without his wife and daughters. Moreover, he had been carefully watching the progress of Hindu women and had felt for some time that Muslim women must give up *purdah* and take their place in the building of the nation. We slowly started taking part in the mixed life of the society of the Central Capital and elsewhere, and later in Lahore.

Within the family, reactions to this step were mixed—the younger members were very happy, but my mother's father became angry. Mother explained to him that she had done it

because it was Father's wish, he said that it was his advice she must heed and do whatever he liked, and she discarded *purdah* as her husband wanted her to lead a life with him. Grandfather later waived his objection and accepted it quite happily.

There was a great deal of public criticism and one or two condemnatory articles appeared in Urdu papers, but Father being the head of a tribe and in a high position, the opposition was confined to a small orthodox section only, and slowly a number of Muslim couples began taking part in mixed functions. Two well-known citizens of Lahore, Sardar Shah and Mahtab Shah, who belonged to an orthodox Syed family, came to see Father. One of them said that, although they differed from him, the day would come when people would erect his statue for taking the lead in emancipating women. Father used to say that Muslim women were being left behind just as Muslim men had been, and we women had to make up for it and work as the Hindu women were doing.

My mother, Amirunnisa, was the most generous person I had ever come across in my life. She would not hesitate to give her last penny to any person in need or trouble. From childhood she stood up for women's rights, and was always ready to fight for them. Having been brought up in strict *purdah*, when she gave it up and entertained the highest in the land, people were surprised to see her doing it as if she had been used to it all her life. Perhaps this was due to there being no *purdah* within our family circle. She knew very little English, but she gradually improved by conversation. Father and Mother used to entertain profusely, and what was most amazing was Mother's feeling at home in any and every society. Their parties were very well-organized and both knew how to make a success of any function, especially my father.

Father had been asked to take over during one of the most difficult periods of the British rule in India. The aftermath of the Rowlatt Act and Jallianwala Bagh incidents, coupled with all that had happened during the Martial Law days in the Punjab, so fresh in the minds of the public; the non-cooperation movement; the Khilafat and Hijrat agitations; and feelings

against foreign rule running so high—with such a background, Father, the only Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, had to perform a most onerous task. At every step he advised Lord Chelmsford, and later Lord Reading, to follow the policy of non-interference in political activities on one hand, and fulfil the legitimate aspirations of the people on the other. The publication of the Hunter Committee's Report had made the Indians very restive, and the question of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Reginald Dyer's punishments was looming large on the horizon. Two reports had been recorded by the Hunter Committee, a majority report of the four European members and a minority report by the Indian members. They were based on purely official evidence, as the Indian National Congress had refused to cooperate and the Indian minority had to agree with the finding of facts regarding the actual occurrences. On receiving copies of the reports, Shafi spent five hours in dictating a note which was sent to the Home Secretary. He differed from Sir William Vincent who, as Home Member of the Executive Council, had noted on the reports, agreeing with the findings of the majority, that 'there had been an open rebellion and the introduction of Martial law and its continuance for such a long period were justified'. When the Hunter Committee's Report came up for discussion before the Executive Council on 10 March 1920, Father recorded in his diary:

> Two reports have been recorded, a majority report by the four European members of the Committee and a minority report by Indian members. Owing to the Congress Committee's refusal to produce evidence before the Hunter Committee, because of the Lieutenant-Governor not being prepared to release political prisoners on bail for the whole period of enquiry, the report is based on official evidence only. Because of this keeping away of the Congress Committee, even the Indian minority have had to agree with the majority in their finding of facts regarding the actual occurrence, including the finding that firing on the mobs at Amritsar on 10th April and at Lahore on 10th and 12th were justified. I spent five hours on dictating my note, which was typed by the clerk and sent off to the Secretary at 10 p.m. I have differed from Sir William

Vincent, who as Home Member has noted on the report of the majority regarding their findings of 'open rebellion', 'introduction of Martial Law' and its continuance for such a long period. I had agreed with the minority in the inference drawn by them from the facts, wherever their conclusions differ from the majority. In spite of the Government of India having at the time sanctioned all action taken by the Local Government, and of Sir William Vincent's direct connection as Home Member, it was a pleasant surprise for me to see that apart from his findings as to the Martial Law—to which in the nature of things the Government of India stands irrevocably committed—he had on the whole been very judicial in his findings. He has proposed General Dyer's retirement from service, but I have strongly urged his dismissal. (*Diary—10 March 1920*)

In the Executive Council discussion, Father took up a strong line and tried to prove that there was no question of rebellion, and had the Lieutenant-Governor and some other European officials not become panicky because of the murders of one or two Europeans, things would not have got out of hand to such an extent. The conclusions arrived at during the discussion in the meeting of the Executive Council were sent to the Secretary of State without his note of dissent. Father strongly protested and his dissent had to be telegraphed to the Secretary of State. Lala Lajpat Rai came to see Father, complimented him on his dissent with regard to the Hunter Committee's Report and on his strongly advocating the cause of the people, and said: 'Punjab is proud of you.' Father strongly advocated the repeal of the Rowlatt Act and the release of the bulk of the Martial Law prisoners. He also advised the Government against imprisoning Mr Gandhi and other political leaders.

The British Government's support of the Greeks was very disheartening, and in his talks with Lord Chelmsford, Father impressed upon him the advisability of making the British Cabinet understand that in dealing with Turkey, they had to take into account and respect the Indian Muslims' sentiments. When he came to know about American President Woodrow Wilson's suggestion that 'Constantinople should be taken away from Turkey and Adrianople be given to Bulgaria', he was

greatly perturbed. It was due to him that the Government of India strongly advised against it and made His Majesty's Government realize that to meet the situation in India, they had to adopt a sympathetic attitude towards Turkey. His long talks and discussions from day to day with both the Viceroys and the European Members of the Executive Council are given in detail in his diary. He was trying to persuade the National Muslim leaders not to be so rabid in their actions that they would alienate British sympathies. Strong pressure exerted by the Government of India compelled the British Government to adopt a different attitude towards Turkey. Father's work within the Government as well as amongst the Muslims outside the country helped to lessen Greek influence over His Majesty's Government and, in spite of American support, Constantinople was not handed over to the Greeks.

The Treaty of Sévres, embodying the dismemberment of Turkey, which had been a great blow to the Muslims in India, had given Mr Gandhi a chance to make them join the non-cooperation movement in large numbers. Father worked consistently in every possible way throughout that period for the revision of the Treaty of Sévres. On the one hand, he advised Muslim leaders of every party to try and secure the cooperation of the British to obtain better terms for Turkey, and on the other, he made the British Government understand that the only way of keeping the Muslims in India with them was to revise the Treaty.

He had long talks with the leaders of the Khilafat Movement, especially the Ali brothers, appealing to them not to alienate British sympathies by agitation during the negotiations that were taking place in connection with the revision of the Turkish peace treaty. He pointed out that when President Woodrow Wilson's attitude had been against a favourable treaty for Turkey, only with the help of the British Government could the position be saved. Moreover, the independence of Hijaz and Iraq, better relations with Afghanistan, and less sympathy for the Greeks—these were vital issues for the Muslims of the whole world, and no useful purpose could be served if, by the actions of some of

them in the Indian subcontinent, the sympathies of the British Government were lost. For Father, Muslim interests throughout the whole world were one and the same, and his policy was never confined to the interests of Indian Muslims only. While keeping India in view, he would not let international Muslim interests suffer. The criticism levelled at Father that he did not help the Khilafat Movement because of the British was most unjustified. The true Muslim spirit shown by him in persuading the British Government to help safeguard Muslim interests in the international sphere by taking into account the Muslim sentiments in India was exemplary. Working for the sovereignty of Turkey over Hijaz, or for the complete independence of Arabia and Iraq and prevention of the fourth Afghan War were not matters that could be lightly brushed aside.

During the War, relations between India and Afghanistan were strained. Afghanistan's friendship with powers who were not too friendly with the Allies and the situation in Russia were causes of great anxiety to the British nation. Father tried to bring about a rapprochement between the two, and his diary reveals all the measures undertaken by him to forge a treaty of friendship. He succeeded; the peace treaty with Afghanistan was signed, and people know that it was due to his efforts that the fourth Afghan War had been averted. Throughout my work with Father, I never heard him talk of Muslim interests in India as separate from international Muslim politics. With Lloyd George as Prime Minister and Lord Curzon as the Secretary of State for India, it was no easy task to influence the policies of Great Britain in the international sphere. Soon after Lord Reading took over, Father succeeded in making him realize that a pro-Muslim policy in the international sphere within the Allied circle would help ease the situation in India. Curzon's pro-Greek policy was infuriating the Muslims and the Khilafat and the Hijrat movements were gathering momentum. Father wrote a note of eighty pages, dealing with the question exhaustively; this note was circulated within the British Cabinet. Ultimately, when the Treaty of Lausanne was signed, it was a great personal

triumph for Father and the Viceroy wrote him a letter of congratulation on success in his mission.

Fazl-i-Hussain and my husband won their seats in the Punjab Legislative Assembly by overwhelming majorities in 1912. Mian Shah Nawaz was a Muslim Leaguer and he did not join the Unionist Party, a mixed party of Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims, that had been organized by Fazl-i-Hussain in the Punjab, and they put Sardar Habibullah, a strong candidate, against him. There had been a tussle for leadership between Fazl-i-Hussain and my husband, and the former won and was appointed a minister. Shah Nawaz's name was put up for Speakership of the Assembly and almost all the European members hoped he would succeed, as he was considered a very able lawyer. Chaudhri Shahabuddin, the Unionist Party candidate, contested against Shah Nawaz. Two days before the election, a number of Muslims came to congratulate Shah Nawaz as everyone considered his success a foregone conclusion. Four or five votes were secured overnight by certain promises, and Shah Nawaz was defeated by only a few votes. While congratulating Shahabuddin, Sir John Maynard, the Leader of the House, uttered only one sentence and sat down. A number of wives of prominent European officials told me that their husbands returned home depressed and said that the Speakership should have gone to Shah Nawaz, who was decidedly the abler of the two candidates and had an impressive personality. After Father's appointment and the family moving to Simla and Delhi, my husband had become one of the leading lawyers of Lahore and had been elected the President of the Tribal Conference in Father's place.

A deputation of prominent women workers, including Mrs Sarojini Naidu and Mrs Margaret Cousins, had waited upon Mr Montague, then Secretary of State for India, asking the British Government to enfranchise Indian women under the new Reforms. A committee called the Mudiman Committee was to sit in Simla and take evidence in connection with different aspects of the coming Reforms. We had organized a Women's Committee in Simla and tried to give our full support to the

demands put forward by the women's deputation in London. When Mrs Annie Besant paid a visit to Simla, we organized a public meeting. I could not sleep that night and went to Father's room early in the morning and told him that I would very much like to speak at the meeting, with his permission. He welcomed the idea and I spoke in a mixed gathering for the first time. The meeting was held in the large grounds of Syed Hassan Imam's house and after my speech Mrs Annie Besant, Syed Hassan Imam and a number of kind friends complimented me. Mrs Daleep Singh appeared as witness before the Mudiman Committee on behalf of the Women's Committee of Action. The British Government decided to leave it to the legislatures in India to give women franchise, if they so desired. It is to the credit of the men of this subcontinent that by 1927 every legislature enacted legislation enfranchising their women on the same property qualifications as for men. It was due to Shah Nawaz's efforts that women secured franchise in the Punjab. As women did not inherit any property amongst the Hindus and Sikhs, or in the entailed Muslim families, or amongst a large number of agriculturists in the Punjab who followed Customary Law, the electorate of women in the country remained a negligible factor.

Very few people know how much Father worked within the Government for the freedom of the Indian subcontinent. With the introduction of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms Scheme, two more Indians were to be appointed to the Executive Council. When Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Sir Chiman Lal Setalvad were being considered, Father advised the Viceroy to appoint Sapru and he wrote a personal letter to Sir Tej about it. Sir Narasino Sharma and Sapru were appointed. The Hindu leaders' faith in Father is reflected in Pundit Moti Lal Nehru sending Pundit Malaviya to see Father, rather than Sir Tej or Sir Narasino Sharma, after Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru's imprisonment. Both Lord Chelmsford and Lord Reading appreciated Father's well-thought-out advice, and his close friends started calling Father 'Reading *ki moonch ka bal*' (Reading's moustache's hair). One day, Lord Reading said to Father during one of his interviews

with the Viceroy: 'Shafi, you are a source of great comfort to me.'

During the two years of his tenure of office as Education Member, Father sanctioned the establishment of six new universities, including the Benares, Aligarh, Delhi, and Dhaka universities. The Muslim University Bill was passed in 1921 and Father appointed the Raja of Mahmoodabad, a Nationalist Muslim, the first Vice-Chancellor, in spite of a number of Muslims objecting to it. His diary is full of the fights that went on during the meetings of the Executive Council for the reorganization of the services. In the meeting held on 27 February 1920, at 10 a.m., the question of the reorganization of the Educational Service was taken up:

> According to the Indian Educational Service reorganization scheme as sanctioned by the Secretary of State, higher posts in the provincial service numbering about 33% of the recent I.E.S. are to be transferred to the I.C.S., and 50% Indianization rule is to be adopted to direct recruitment for the latter. It was, after discussion, decided that vacancies occurring in the transferred posts shall all be filled up by Indians and at the same time 50% of vacancies in the present I.E.S. posts shall be similarly filled up until, in the process of time, one half of the entire cadre is Indianized. After that the present I.E.S.'s transferred posts shall be merged and 50% Indianization rule shall apply to all the vacancies. This will accelerate the realization of the ultimate goal of the Indianization of I.E.S. On the whole a very satisfactory decision. (*Diary—27 February 1920*)

Father sanctioned the first scholarship for a girl to study abroad, and Mahmooda Begum of the Central Provinces was chosen for it.

He had to fight hard to get Indians appointed in Education, Medical, and Local Self-Government key posts. Throughout his tenure of office, both as Education and Law Member, he fought for the rapid Indianization of the ICS, the Foreign and Political Services, the Indian Forest Service, and for the higher cadre of the armed forces. Page after page of his diary is full of discussion of such matters, within the Executive Council meetings as well

as during his interviews with the Viceroys. He threatened to resign three times during his tenure of office, each time for the appointment of a Hindu to a key post, and it was to his credit that ultimately his recommendations were accepted by the Viceroys over the heads of the Secretaries of Department. Father had to cross swords often with his European colleagues in the Executive Council over the question of the pace of Indianization in various services. The question of the opening of the Foreign and Political Service to Indians was thrashed out:

> This afternoon, Foreign and Political Department's note brought on the file in which the Political and Foreign Secretaries asked for reconsideration of para. 8 of our despatch regarding Indianization to their own department, which they opposed. Their joint note went to the Reform Office and Sir W. Morris referred the case to the Home Office. All Home Office notes opposed it and agreed with Foreign and Political Department's view and Sir William Vincent's note strongly advocated the Indian claim to a share. The Viceroy directed Sir John Wood to write a detailed note and then circulate the case among the members of the Council. This note is one of considerable length and the gist of it is against the admission of Indians into this Department, and more particularly into the higher branches of the service, i.e. N.W.F.P. cadre as Residents and Political Agents and to Consular posts. Sir George Lounds had agreed with him except in regard to judicial appointments and Sir George Barnes agreed with Sir George Lounds. Mr Hailey supports the Indian case to share in this Department. It is curious that while the two European civilian members support claims of Indian members of the Civil Service, the two non-civilian members, who are also barristers, oppose it. My note was typed on 28th in which I strongly condemned Sir John Wood's views and dealt with every point raised by him in his note. I have also given a warning that should department views be accepted, there will be wide-spread dissatisfaction all over the country. (*Diary—27 April 1920*)

Father's diary contains instance after instance of both Lord Chelmsford and Lord Reading agreeing with the Indian member's point of view with regard to the Indianization of the services. Father fought at every step in securing full powers for

the Indian members of the Executive Council with regard to their departments, as well as for deciding important questions without placing them before the Executive Council. In his handling of the Local Self-Government files which formed part of his own department, he tried to transfer as much as he possibly could into Indian hands. A greater number of Indians, especially in the higher cadre, were placed in key positions in the Indian Medical Service, of which he was in charge. When a high European official was about to retire, he fought for the appointment of an Indian doctor in his place and succeeded in getting the first Indian appointed in that position.

Father and Mr Montague Butler, ICS, who was stationed in the Punjab, were very good friends and he had promised Butler that he would send for him if and when he joined the Executive Council. When his Secretary of the Education Department, Sir Henry Sharp, retired, Father proposed Mr Butler's name and he was appointed. Later, he secured the presidentship of the Council of State for Butler.

I had the pleasure of knowing Mr and Mrs M.A. Jinnah personally. Ruttie Jinnah and I had become good friends and I spent many pleasant and interesting hours with them both in Simla and New Delhi. Mr Jinnah was always spotlessly dressed, quick at repartee, a perfect host and a social asset. His speeches on bills and other important questions in the Central Legislative Assembly were memorable, and people so eagerly looked forward to the days when he was speaking that they would not hesitate to forego their lunches so as not to miss one word of his speeches. How brief, specific, apt, and convincing were the points he raised and the words he used. Ruttie had a charming, lovable personality. Moreover, she was a decidedly beautiful woman. During my talks with her, I realized that she was a disappointed soul who had lost her zest for life. When she insisted on eating things like green chillies, that were forbidden by the doctors, and I remonstrated her for doing so, she would not listen. She was a person who felt lost and was deliberately trying to shock people around her. I used to feel for her and pity her greatly.

When Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal had come to Lahore to lay the foundation stone of a building in 1916, I had the pleasure of meeting her a number of times. Throughout Father's membership of the Executive Council, we met Her Highness fairly often both in Delhi and Simla and my sister-in-law, Asghari, and I were taking an active part in the All-India Muslim Ladies's Conference of which Her Highness was the President. My son, Ahmad Shah Nawaz, was born in Delhi in December 1922, and he was only a fortnight old when the Begum of Bhopal breakfasted with us one morning. She held the new baby in her arms, blessed him and said to Father that she would like to send some presents for him on her return to Bhopal. Father thanked the Begum and asked her not to do so, as he was a Government official. She replied that the family's connections with Bhopal had been of long standing, and when even the Viceroys were accepting presents, she saw no reason why Father should refuse to do so, just because he was a member of the Executive Council. He requested Her Highness to reserve the present for the baby until he had left the Council, and so help him to stick to his staunch principle of not accepting anything from anyone during his term of office, however much he valued that person's friendship.

Just before Lord Chelmsford was to hand over to the new Viceroy, Lord Reading, the question of lifting the embargo on wheat came up before the Executive Council, and all the European members advocated it. The Indian members did their best to make them realize the error of such a decision, but it was to no avail. The Viceroy sided with the European members, but just as he was about to dictate the orders, it was Father who had the courage to say:

> Sir, please consider one important aspect of this question before you issue the orders. We, the three Indian members, are pointing out to you that lifting the embargo at this juncture would have grave results, and if, in spite of our considered advice, this is done, and the consequences of what we apprehend follow, would it be fair to your successor to issue such an order now, when you are leaving within a couple of days?

The Viceroy paused, put down his pen, and turning to the European members said: 'There is a good deal in what Shafi says and I had better not issue this order.' After the meeting was over, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru complimented Father on the strength and courage shown by him.

Lord Reading took over as Viceroy and Father advised him to repeal the repressive laws and release political prisoners, so that the new Councils and Assemblies elected under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms Scheme should have a chance of working successfully in a free and unfettered atmosphere.

After two or three years of membership, he was asked to become the Law Member. As such, Father made every effort for the creation of a Supreme Court, for the appointment of an Indian Advocate-General, had the distinction between barristers and *vakils* removed, and worked for the organization of Bar Council reforms in the Law Department. He had his full secretariat reorganized and had practising Indian lawyers appointed to different posts. It was during Father's appointment as Law Member that an Indian practising lawyer, a Mr Gupta, was appointed Secretary of the Law Department, after a hard battle.

Mother was asked to preside at the All-India Muslim Ladies' Conference held at Agra in 1921. A number of Muslim women leaders of every province attended the Conference and the meetings were well organized. Important resolutions, including one against polygamy, were passed. All three evenings were spent in the gardens of the Taj Mahal under a full moon, and the majesty of that architecture and the sublime beauty of the milk-white, perfect structure filled the heart and mind with unbounded wonder, happiness, and esteem. That the hand of man should be able to construct such a unique building was a most valued human achievement. We visited the fort at Agra and I stood in the window from which Emperor Shah Jahan used to gaze throughout his long imprisonment at the grave of his beloved sleeping in the Taj, and where his daughter Jahan Ara, my namesake, was his constant companion during the last years of his life.

How much Father deplored the fact that the Fazl-i-Hussain section went on creating rifts amongst the Muslims! He was genuinely grieved to find that outstanding Muslim leaders, including Mr Jinnah, were working with the Congress without first settling the question of important safeguards for the Muslims, and annual sessions of the Congress and the League were being held at the same place. At the Nagpur session held in December, Maulana Muhammad Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, and Dr Kitchleu had as usual spoken, and a new name, that of Mr Hasrat Mohani, had also appeared in the meetings.

Father had talks with a number of Hindu leaders of moderate opinion within the Congress, especially with Pundit Moti Lal Nehru, requesting them not to keep away from the new Councils and Assemblies. He believed that entry into the legislatures by some of the foremost speakers and politicians, like Nehru, Jinnah, and others, would accelerate the pace of constitutional reforms in India and would show to the world what outstanding personalities existed as leaders of political opinion in the subcontinent. He was delighted when the Swaraj Party was formed and the All-India Muslim League also decided to contest the elections. He carefully watched the election results and was happy to find that a large number of outstanding personalities of every section had decided to enter the Assemblies, both in the provinces and in the Centre. He wrote in his diary:

> Council elections are now in full swing. In Bombay and Madras, in non-Muslim constituencies for the Assembly, the Swaraj Party has had signal victories. In Bombay city, Patel had defeated Sir Chiman Lal Setalvad and Jamna Das Dwarkadas. Two Poona seats have been captured by the Swarajists and Mr Kelkar is one of them. Mr Jayakar has beaten Piranjpai in the University seat for the Bombay Council. I am glad Maulvi Rafi-ud-Din Ahmad has been elected to the Bombay Council. Jinnah in Bombay, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Moti Lal Nehru in UP have been elected unopposed to the Central Assembly. The new Assembly will have some very able fighters in it and the position of government will be more difficult than was expected. However, I am glad non-cooperation is now dead and the future struggle has re-entered the constitutional arena. (*Diary—22 November 1923*)

Throughout his travels all over India, Father contacted Muslim leaders of every school of thought, always persuading them to follow a policy of working for self-government with proper safeguards for the minorities. His diary is full of his talks with Hakim Ajmal Khan, which once lasted for five hours, with the Raja of Mahmoodabad, the Ali brothers, Maulana Abdul Bari, and others. Maulana Abdul Bari and he were good friends and the Maulana helped him a great deal in his talks with the Nationalist Muslim leaders. Father's strong and impressive personality coupled with a charming and gentle manner, his exceptional way of explaining different angles of a question and placing both sides of the picture before the person he was talking to, could not but go home to the listener, and he possessed a great power of persuasion.

The Khilafat Committee asked to wait on the Viceroy in a deputation, and Father advised Lord Reading to receive it. They met the Governor-General on 19 January 1921, and Father was asked by the Viceroy to be present. The Raja of Mahmoodabad, Abul Kalam Azad, and Hasrat Mohani did not come; Mr Gandhi, Shraddhananda, and Ram Raj Datta Chaudhri were the Hindu members of the deputation. Only the extremist section of the Muslims was there and the deputation was not very representative. Dr Kitchleu and Agha Sardar Ali of Sialkot were the Punjab representatives. There were no leaders from Bengal, Madras, Central Provinces, or Bihar. Chintamani was the only representative from Bombay and the rest of them were from Delhi and United Provinces. The Viceroy's reply was very frank and sympathetic:

> After the interview, the Viceroy took me to his room and in our conversation I again impressed upon him that Hijaz and Constantinople were the two pivotal points. The Sultan should be allowed to remain in Constantinople and either his suzerainty over the Hijaz as Khalifa conceded, or Arabia given its complete independence. (*Diary—20 January 1921*)

The new Reforms had been boycotted by the Congress and by a section of the Muslims. Father's All-India Party, headed by the Aga Khan, had been for cooperation, and their representatives had entered the legislatures. The Muslim League Assembly Party was formed in the Central Legislatures and Mr Jinnah was elected Leader. Father had been delighted at the formation of the Swaraj Party, and had three hours talk with Pundit Moti Lal Nehru, who had been elected its Leader. Many of the Hindu members of the legislatures soon got to know of Shafi's independence and fights within the Executive Council with his European colleagues for the promotion of Indian interests. On 12 January 1922, Mr Bhopindra Nath Basu, member of the Secretary of State's Council, who was on a short visit to Delhi, came to lunch with Father:

> During the conversation, he told me that when Gandhi came over to India from South Africa, the late Mr Gokhale conceived the idea of nominating him as his successor in the Presidency of the Servant of India Society. He consulted Basu about it and the latter advised him not to be hasty in coming to a decision about it, but to study Gandhi carefully. Subsequently, Mr Gokhale informed Basu that he had changed his mind, as he had arrived at the conclusion that Gandhi was wanting in practical statesmanship and there were possibilities of developments in his ideals, which might prove dangerous to the Indian National Movement. The judgement then formed by Gokhale about Gandhi has now been fully justified.
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> (*Diary—12 January 1922*)

In March 1922, Mr Gandhi was arrested and imprisoned and his magnetic personality, which had held a number of militant elements together in a non-violent movement, was removed from the Indian political sphere. This gave a chance to communal elements to come forward and take advantage of the movement started from religious fervour during the Non-cooperation and Khilafat movements. An association of the Hindus, named Hindu Mahasabha, was organized and Mr Shraddhananda started the Shudhi and Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Sanghatan movements, as a result of which Hindu-Muslim relations

became highly strained. With the signing of the peace treaty with Turkey at Lausanne, Muslims were appreciating the efforts of the British Government on their behalf. Maulana Abdul Bari issued a pamphlet asking Muslims to organize themselves in defence of their religion. The Jamiat-i-Ulama Committee appealed to the same effect and Maulana Abdul Qadir, President, and Rana Ferozuddin, Secretary, resigned from the Punjab Provincial Khilafat Committee. A number of other leaders appealed to their community to turn their attention to internal affairs and to help organize their co-religionists, so that such communal movements as Shudhi and Sanghatan should not succeed. During the course of his Presidential address on the first anniversary of the All-India Mahasabha held at Gaya on 30 December 1922, Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya said that 'Hindus should not hesitate for a moment to lay down even their lives if their *dharma* was attacked'. At the next anniversary held at Benares on 19 August 1923, Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya indulged in stronger language. Presiding over the annual meeting of the Bara Bazar Hindu Sabha, Calcutta, on 25 July 1926, Dr Moonje traced the history of lost Hinduism and said: 'The object of the Hindu religion was that India might be called Hindustan, the land of the Hindus.' He further said that the mild and docile Hindu was a prey to domination of two kinds and he had to see whether, while putting up with machine-gun domination as an inevitable evil, he was also to put up with the other domination. (By 'other domination' he meant the domination of the Muslims.) Dr Moonje in his Presidential address at the special session of the Hindu Mahasabha held at Patna on 16 April 1927, said: 'Hindu-Muslim unity is to my mind a volatile commodity, appearing very real and worth having till the price is paid, when it assumes the form of impalpability and intractability.' He advised his co-religionists that they should leave the Muslims severely alone. Lala Lajpat Rai said in one of his speeches that the Hindus should put their own house in order so that they would be strong enough to cope with the combined forces of the British Government and the

Muslim community. The Hindu-Muslim situation continued to deteriorate and riots took place in several important towns.

With the Indian National Congress movement for complete independence gaining strength, every possible effort had been made to come to some justiciable settlement with the Hindus over the question of safeguards for the Muslims, but without any success, and people began to get disheartened. In fact, some Muslims had started talking about the partition of the subcontinent and a section of the students at Cambridge were devising a plan for a state of Muslim majority areas.

Father believed in promoting friendship between the Muslims and the Sikhs. As the majority of both communities were argiculturists and soldiers, were known to be spendthrifts, and were mostly under the heels of moneylenders, they had a great deal in common. Moreover, the Muslims had a small majority in the population of the Province and it was in their interest to keep a brave minority like the Sikhs with them, so that when they secured their majority rule under a democratic system of government they could carry on their administration successfully with the whole-hearted cooperation of the Sikh community. During his period of office in the Government of India, Father deplored the trouble between the Sikhs and Muslims in the Punjab because of the Gurdwara Bill and certain other unwise policies followed by the Muslim leaders there, and used to say that the persons handling affairs in the province did not have the necessary foresight and imagination.

Mother, Asghari, Geti, and I used to attend sessions of the Central Assembly and sit in the gallery, sometimes for hours, listening to debates on burning questions of the day. Both in Simla and Delhi, we came into contact with most of the outstanding Indian leaders, especially the Nehru family. Pundit Moti Lal Nehru and Father had been together in England and were never content with just shaking hands when they met, but would embrace each other like brothers. Nehru met Father on 22 March 1923, and had a long talk with him:

> ...impressed upon him the paramount necessity of solving the Hindu-Muslim problem. He told me that he believed Gandhi had conceived a definite plan and one morning, we will wake up to find that the problems had been solved. He thought that the action contemplated by Gandhi would alienate his old friend from him. (I believe Nehru meant thereby Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya and company.) He told me that he was first going to Allahabad and from there he would proceed to Bombay for a conference with Gandhi. (*Diary—22 March 1923*)

I can never forget Uncle Moti Lal Nehru's affection for me. He became fond of my daughter, Mumtaz, who was writing a great deal of poetry and was beginning to be a good speaker. On one occasion which is unforgettable, I had arranged a dinner party to meet the Home Member, Sir James Crera, and Father was visiting Delhi during that week in 1927. My husband and I were in Delhi for the Budget Session of the Central Assembly and I requested Uncle Moti Lal to attend the dinner and spend some time with Father. He replied that since the dinner was being given to meet a government official and the Swaraj Party was non-cooperating, it would not be possible for him to attend it. I looked sad and aggrieved and asked: 'How can an uncle say "no" to a niece?' The result of it was that he was the first to come and the last to go. I related this incident to Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru when he attended a dinner party at my house arranged to meet Indira after her marriage. Pundit Moti Lal and Father spent a happy evening together and had a long talk. They were great men, who valued human relationship and sincere affection above everything else. Father and I once agreed in London that had Pundit Moti Lal Nehru and Mr C.R. Das been alive, there would certainly have been a settlement between the Hindus and Muslims, for they were statesmen, and not mere politicians.

When the question of further constitutional reforms for India was discussed in the Executive Council, one of the European members strongly opposed it and said that India must wait until 1929 for further reforms. Father advocated immediate further reforms, especially giving responsibility to the Central Government, but the majority opinion was for the appointment

of a Royal Commission. Sapru had resigned because of ill-health and Chatterji had taken his place. A number of members had sent resolutions to the Central Assembly and the Council of State asking for full responsible Government in the Centre and these were discussed in the meeting for four hours, including Mr Ranga Ayer's resolution, but Sir William Vincent strongly opposed it and the European members of the Council supported him. Father was all for full responsible government being given immediately, but a compromise was arrived at that a Royal Commission be appointed, and the proposal was sent to the Secretary of State. With the Labour Government in the saddle and Mr Ramsay MacDonald as Prime Minister, Indian members had great hopes of its acceptance, but the suggestions were turned down and Father was disgusted with the reply. The resolution was debated in the Assembly and Mr Hailey, the Home Member, dealt with it. Father refused to speak, in spite of his promise to Hailey. He noted in his diary:

> Moti Lal Nehru's speech was characterized by moderation and, avoiding rhetoric, he seemed to weigh every word uttered by him. He said that the Swarajists had moderated their demand in order to carry the Nationalists and the Liberals with them. They did not ask that full responsible government be handed over to them in a bundle, but wanted a distinct step to be taken towards it. The Government's offer was unsatisfactory. A Round Table Conference was essential to devise a satisfactory scheme. 'We had come here', said he, 'to offer co-operation, non-cooperators though we be, if you would care to have it, otherwise we will be non-cooperating again'. (*Diary—8 February 1924*)
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> Hailey spoke after Ranga Ayer's speech and referred to a number of different leaders' speeches and told the House that the resolution could not be accepted, and announced that Government was prepared to inquire into the justiciable causes of complaints as authorized by the Secretary of State. On enquiry by Jinnah if universalisation would be by a departmental committee, Hailey replied in the affirmative. Moti Lal Nehru then moved his amendment. Mr Jinnah criticized Government's offer and supported Nehru's amendment. Replying to Hailey's criticism of their present

> attitude based on his (Jinnah's) opinion expressed in 1919 approving diarchy, he reminded the Home Member that he himself was only a Commissioner at that time. Since then he had become a member of the Council. Much water had flown under the bridges since then, diarchy had been tried and failed, and he was therefore entitled to modify his opinion. Consensus of opinion afterwards was that Jinnah's was the best contribution to the debate on that day. (*Diary—8 February 1924*)

Pundit Motil Lal's amendment was carried by a large majority.

On 17 February 1924, the Ali brothers and Maulana Abdul Bari met Father and the interview lasted for three hours:

> I spoke frankly to them about the past, present, and future and told them something about what Lord Reading had done during the Turkish crisis and emphasized the danger to Islam in India because of the Shudhi and Sanghatan movements. They also spoke quite frankly and admitted the need of organizing the Muslim community... I pointed out the changes in British policy since Lloyd George had gone out and that appeared to impress them. They both said in clear language that what they cared for was not so much Swaraj but the welfare of Islam. 'Tell Lord Reading from us', they said, 'that it is Lajpat Rai and Madan Mohan Malaviya who are the real enemies of the British and of Islam in the country, and not Gandhi!' They promised me that they would not oppose the organizing of the Muslim community for the purpose of defending and promoting Muslim interests in India. (*Diary—17 February 1924*)

Father was placed on a Constitutional Advance Committee, appointed with Sir Alexander Mudiman as Chairman, and so known as the Mudiman Committee. He pressed for the association of non-officials on the Committee and suggested Moti Lal Nehru and Jinnah's names to the Viceroy. Moti Lal Nehru spent the afternoon with Father on 31 May 1924, and had a most cordial talk. Father did his best to persuade him to accept the invitation and join the Committee, and tried to impress upon him the advantage to India of persons like himself working on a committee of this type. Moti Lal gave a number of reasons why

he could not accept the membership of the Committee, but he promised Father that he would abstain from doing anything calculated to hamper the work of the Committee or to oppose it. When Mr Jinnah met Father on 1 June 1924, they talked for nearly two hours and Father requested him fervently to join the Committee, both for the sake of Indian and Muslim interests. The Committee was appointed consisting of the President, three Europeans, Father, and five non-official members, including Mr Jinnah.

Father's term of office as a member of the Executive Council was finishing and Lord Reading asked him to stay on, if not for a long period, at least long enough to complete the work of the Reforms Committee. Father agreed to do so and accepted an extension until 31 December 1924. He was asked to suggest names for his successor and he suggested the names of Jinnah, Syed Hassan Imam, and Fazl-i-Hussain. Father had been appointed Vice-President of the Executive Council after Sir William Vincent's retirement in 1922.

Father's idea for a constitution for India is embodied in his book named *Some Important Problems*:

> When full Dominion Status is granted to India, it is obvious that the government of the country will have to be federal. The tendency of world movements in all civilized countries being towards the introduction of democratic institutions, autocracy is out of the question in a self-governing India. Moreover, there would be no need whatever for an autocratic form of government when full responsible government comes into being in this country, for it will no longer be a case of minority government, foreign in origin, ruling over the Indian subcontinent. For these reasons a unitary form of government is an obvious impossibility in a self-governing India of the future. The only logical goal to be aimed at is that which was laid down for guiding the Indian National Congress by Sir Henry Cotton in the Presidential address delivered by him at its Bombay anniversary, during the Christmas of 1924. 'Autonomy', said he, 'is the key-note of England's true relations with its great colonies. It is the key-note also of India's destiny. It is more than this—it is the destiny of the world. The tendency of empire in the

civilised world is in the direction of compact or autonomous states which are federated together and attached, by common motives and self-interest, to a central power. You already have local legislatures, in which a certain measure of representation has been granted to the Indian people. A small concession had been made in this direction, but it is wholly inadequate to meet growing demands. In the cautious and gradual development of representation, in the increase of your power and influence in India itself, invoking the ultimate extension of autonomy, we shall find the appropriate and natural prize and legitimate goal for Indian aspirations. The ideal of an Indian patriot is the establishment of a federation of free and separate states, the United States of India, placed on a fraternal footing with the self-governing colonies, each with its own local autonomy, cemented together under the aegis of Great Britain. That is the goal which the National Congress has kept in view; that is the ideal which the history of democratic countries like the United States of America, Australia, and Switzerland have placed before us. A federal system of government in India with the control of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, as well as matters essentially of common interest to the whole of the country, in the hands of the Central Government, the control of everything else, together with the residuary powers, being vested in the Provinces, would make the Central Government strong enough to cope with all foreign aggression and thus constitute a complete guarantee for the safety of India as well as for a satisfactory administration of what may be characterized as Imperial Affairs. It will, at the same time, give complete control of their own internal affairs to the various constitutional states of the future Indian Federation'.

Father proposed the separation of Sindh from the Bombay Presidency. He writes in the same book:

...when this comes about, we will then have six Indian provinces with a Hindu majority, i.e. Madras, Bombay, Central Provinces, United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, and Assam, on the one had and five provinces, i.e. Bengal, Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sindh, and Balochistan with a Muslim majority on the other. The state of things created by this division of India into eleven provinces as mentioned above will itself be a guarantee of fair treatment of minorities by the majorities in all the provinces. For the majorities

> in one set of provinces will be afraid of withholding from the minorities their legitimate rights, lest their brethren in the other provinces in which they constitute a minority be similarly treated. In these circumstances, the real solution of the whole problem lies in securing to the Muslim majorities in Bengal and Punjab their right of the majorities to which they are legitimately entitled, as well as in the constitution of Sindh as a separate province.

The Lee Commission's report was discussed in the Executive Council and Father strongly advocated a more rapid pace of Indianization of services than the one recommended by the Commission.

The 1924 session of the Council of State and of the Legislative Assembly were the last sessions that Father attended as member of the Executive Council. He was then the Leader of the House in the Council of State. He was sounded with regard to the acceptance of the Presidentship of the Council of State. A number of farewell dinners were arranged for him during that period and the farewell speeches delivered at different functions were highly laudatory of his work as a great patriot, an untiring worker, and a cementing force between different sections and races in the subcontinent. The Aligarh Muslim University and the Delhi University had conferred Doctorates on him. Mr Montague Butler, who had been appointed Governor of the Central Provinces, said when he came to thank Father: 'I realize what I owe to you.' Friends, Europeans and Indians alike, went on saying to my parents that they could not conceive of Simla and Delhi without Sir Muhammad and Lady Shafi. Father was awarded the title of KCSI. The Viceroy's farewell dinner for him was for eighty guests and he said some very kind things about Father's work during his tenure of office.

The report of the Mudiman Enquiry Committee was circulated to the members of the Executive Council for their opinion one day before Father's departure from Delhi. There was a majority report by the European members and a minority report by the non-officials; Father sent a note supporting the minority recommendations for the appointment of a Royal Commission.

Relinquishing charge of his office on 31 December 1924, Father returned to Lahore to resume his practice and serve the nation in public life during that critical period in the history of India.

Demands for further reforms towards full independence had been taken up in earnest by all the parties unitedly. Mr Jinnah was the President of the All-India Muslim League, the Congress and League's annual sessions were being held in the same places and strong efforts were made to bring about a rapprochement between the two major nations in India. The non-cooperation movement started by the Congress had been supported only by the Nationalist Muslims, who had gone to jail with their Congress comrades. Although the British Government had said that no further reforms would be given to the subcontinent before ten years had passed, the position in India had become untenable and His Majesty's Government were compelled to appoint a Royal Commission to study the question and formulate proposals for further reforms. They committed a grave blunder by placing only British members on the Commission. Indians belonging to moderate schools of thought, like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr Srinivas Shastri, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar and others; or Mr M.A. Jinnah, Sir Muhammad Shafi, Sir Ali Imam, Sir Abdur Rahim, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoolah, and Sir Sultan Ahmad, could have been included. The obvious result was the boycott of the Simon Commission by all the foremost political parties. Father was in a dilemma. He had just returned from a position of responsibility within the Government and he knew how strong the Congress propaganda was in Great Britain and how much the members of the party that was in power in England, the Labour Party, were favouring the Hindu nation. He knew full well that the Muslim case would go by default if it was not placed in its proper perspective before the Commission. He also felt very strongly that with the Labour Party in power, separate electorates would go and Muslims would have to live under Hindu domination for ever. He had been constantly in touch with His Highness the Aga Khan and together, in close collaboration with each other, they were trying to assess the



1. Sir Muhammad Shafi KCSI with Lady Shafi at the Delhi Darbar, in 1912, for the coronation of King George V.



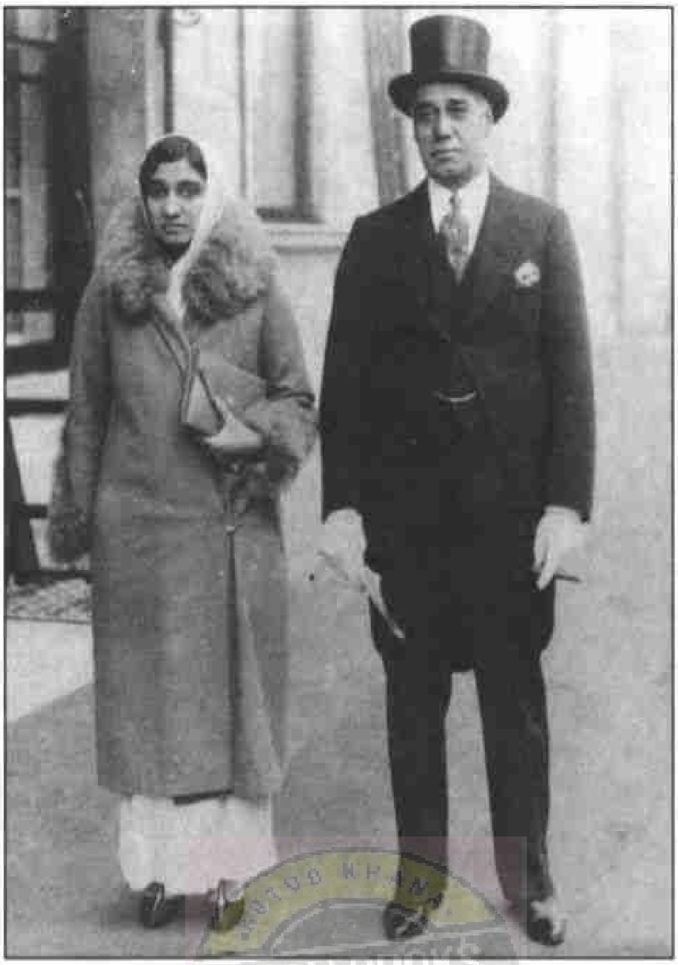
2. Sir Muhammad Shafi with wife and daughter, vacationing in Blankenberge on the Belgium Coast.



3. Mian Shah Nawaz at Trinity College, Cambridge, 1898.



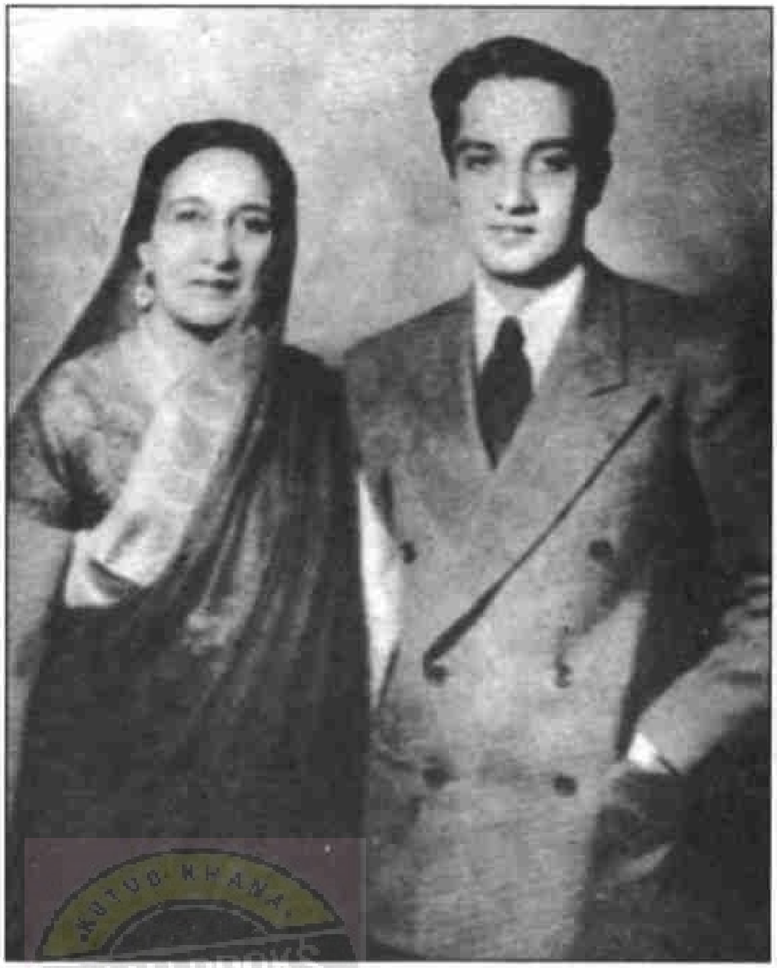
4. The author, Begum Jahan Ara Shahnawaz.



5. The author with her father, London, 1930.



6. Sir Muhammad Shafi, Lady Shafi, Begum Shahnawaz and her daughter, Mumtaz Shahnawaz, in the Royal Gallery at the House of Lords.



7. The author with her son, Dr Ahmad Shahnawaz at Waldorf Astoria, New York, 1946.



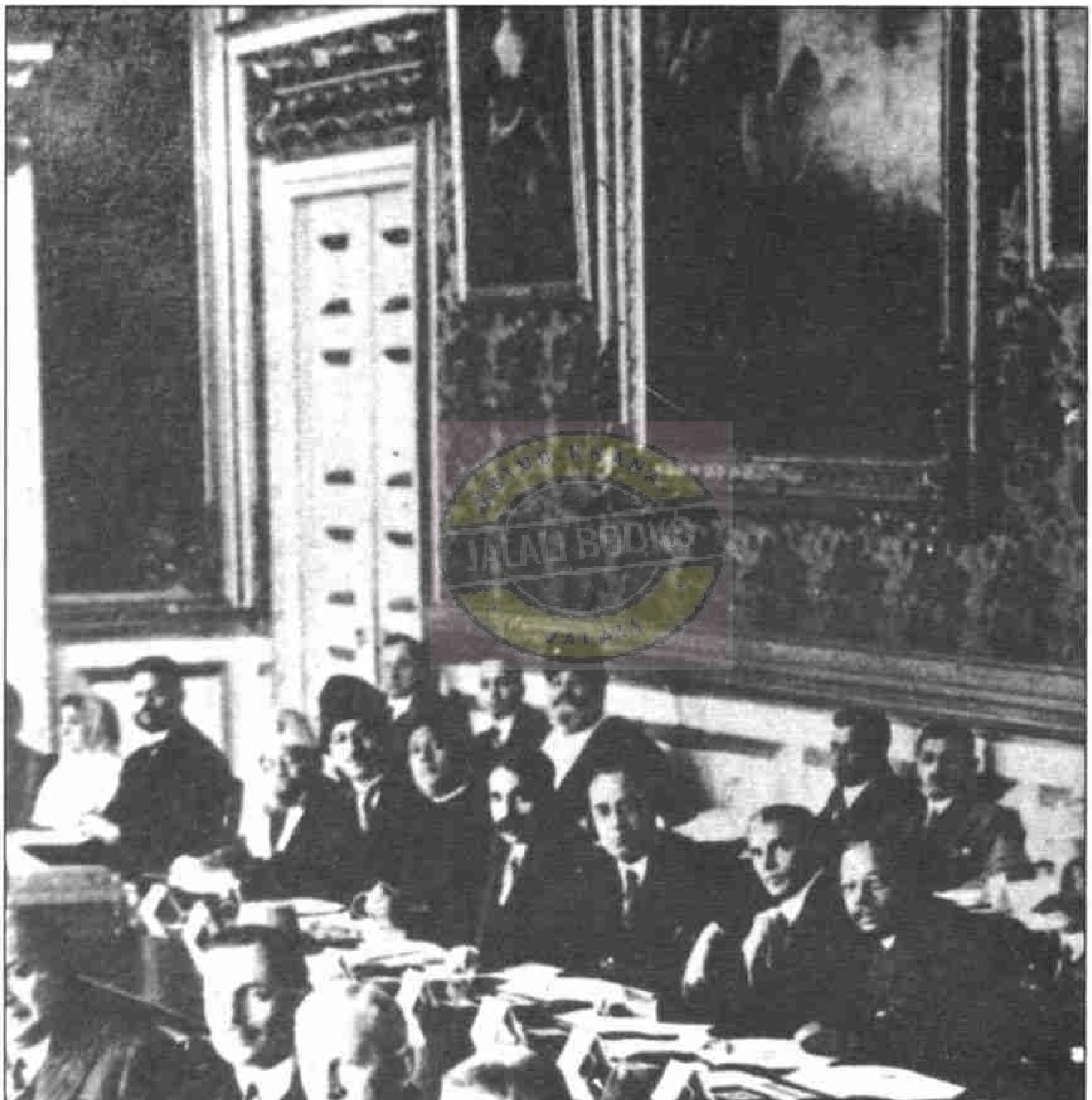
8. Dr Ahmad Shahnawaz with wife Shamim, son Zahur and daughter-in-law Ayisha.



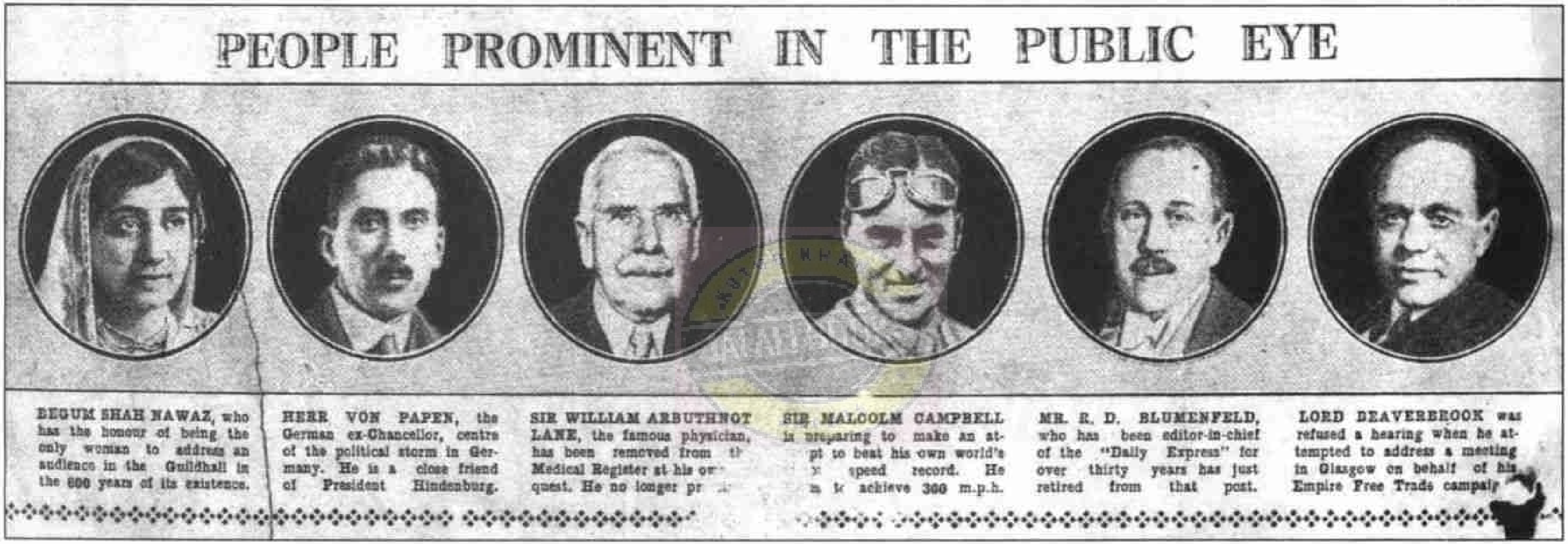
9. The Prime Minister of Australia, Mr J.H. Scullin, speaking at a banquet in honour of the delegates to the Round Table Conference. Lady Shafi and Chief Justice of Great Britain, Mr J.H. Thomas are on his left.



10. R to L: Prime Minister of Great Britain Sir Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minsiter of Canada Mr R.B. Bennet with Sir Muhammad Shafi, President of All-India Muslim League (extreme left).



11. At the Round Table Conference, 1930: President of the All-India Muslim League Sir Muhammad Shafi, Vice-President M. A. Jinnah, with other members. On the extreme left is Begum Shahnawaz, the only Muslim woman delegate to the Conference.



PEOPLE PROMINENT IN THE PUBLIC EYE

BEGUM SHAH NAWAZ, who has the honour of being the only woman to address an audience in the Guildhall in the 600 years of its existence.

HERR VON PAPEN, the German ex-Chancellor, centre of the political storm in Germany. He is a close friend of President Hindenburg.

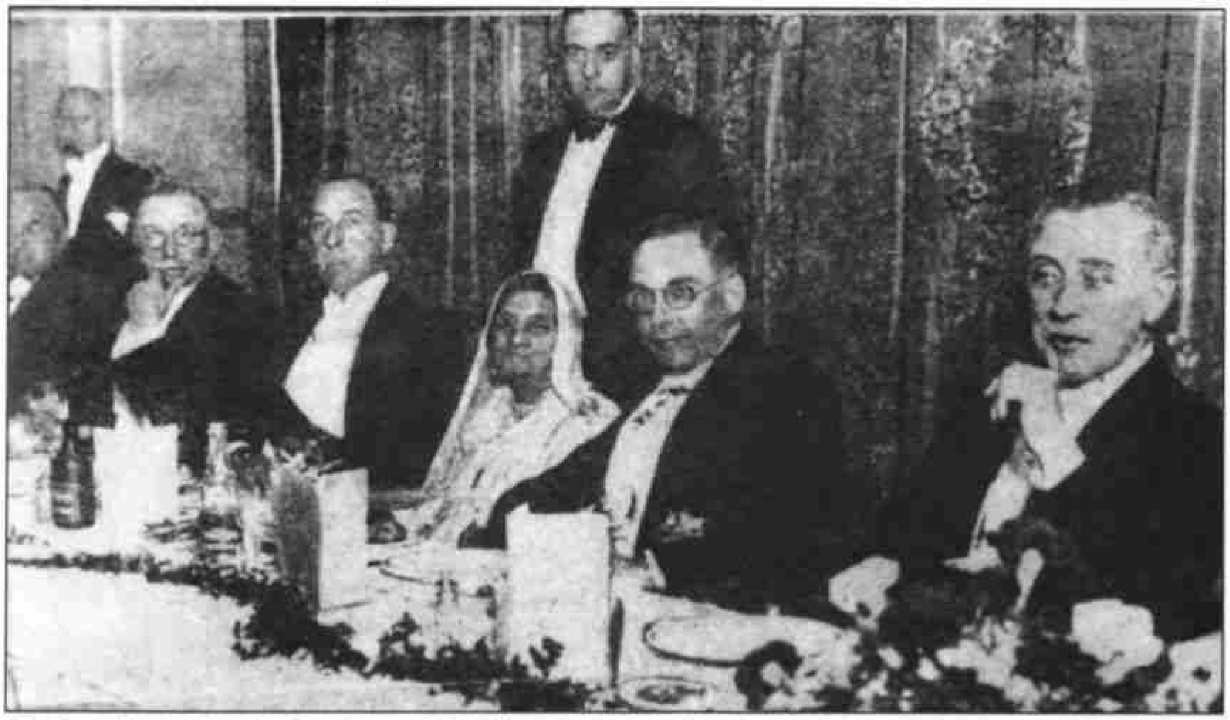
SIR WILLIAM ARBUTHNOT LANE, the famous physician, has been removed from th Medical Register at his ow quest. He no longer pr

SIR MALCOLM CAMPBELL is preparing to make an at- pt to beat his own world's speed record. He to achieve 300 m.p.h.

MR. R. D. BLUMENFELD, who has been editor-in-chief of the "Daily Express" for over thirty years has just retired from that post.

LORD BEAVERBROOK was refused a hearing when he attempted to address a meeting in Glasgow on behalf of his Empire Free Trade campaig

12. Begum Jahan Ara Shahnawaz counted as one of the prominent people in *The Statesman*, 4 Dec. 1932. She was the only woman speaker to address an audience at the Guild Hall, London.



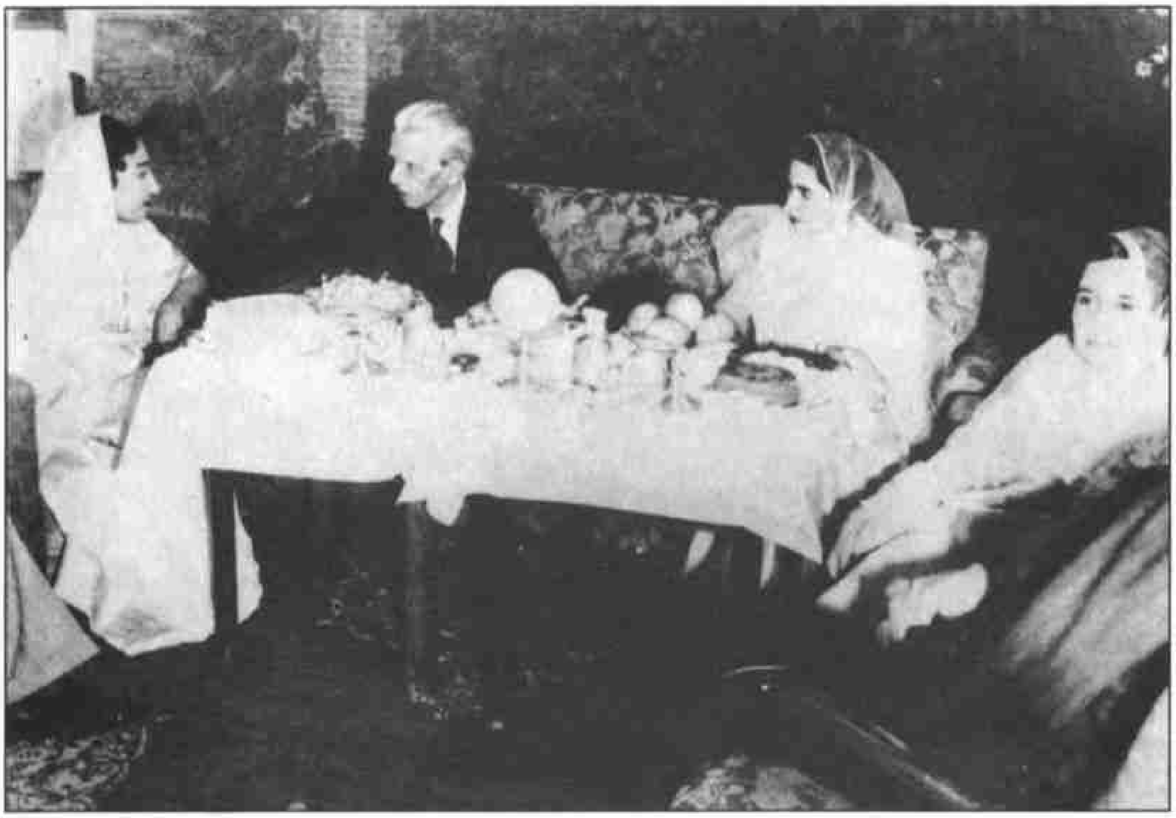
13. At a dinner by the Institute of Public Administration. L to R: Mr J.H. Thomas, Sir John Anderson, Lady Shafi, Sir Richard Squires, and Lord Meston.



14. Lady Shafi with Gandhi and Charlie Chaplin at her personal physician Dr Kaitial's home in Canning Town, London, 22 September 1931.



15. Quaid-i-Azam with the Punjab MNAs and MPAs outside the Punjab Assembly building, Lahore 1946. Begum Shahnawaz is sitting on his right.



16. At a tea reception hosted by Quaid-i-Azam. R to L: Begum Shahnawaz, Begum Shaukat Hayat and the Quaid.



17. Quaid-i-Azam, Fatima Jinnah and Mumtaz Shahnawaz (Tazi).



18. L to R: Mian Iftikharuddin, Sir Shaukat Hayat and Nawab of Mamdot at the Muslim League Headquarters in Lahore, March 1947, from where the Civil Disobedience Movement was launched.



19. The author with Governor-General Khawaja Nazimuddin with other members at the Muslim League session in Dhaka.



20. The author visiting Yung Ho Kung (Lama Temple) in Peking, China, 1954.



21. The author talking to Madam Chou Enlai, while leading the Pakistani delegation in China, 1954.

position in British as well as in Indian politics. Meanwhile, the Congress declared for the total boycott of the Simon Commission and Mr Jinnah and the Muslim League followed suit.

Father and the leaders of his school of thought decided to hold a conference in Lahore, going to the extent of courting a split in the All-India Muslim League, which until then he had avoided at all costs. A conference was held in Lahore in December 1927, and a large number of prominent Muslims from all over India attended it; in fact, the success was beyond expectations. Most of the leaders of moderate opinion who had visited England were well aware of the position there because of the Congress propaganda, and they were very apprehensive of important safeguards for the Muslims being left out completely in future reforms. The people in England had been told that only a handful of Muslim yes-men of the British Government were opposing Dominion Status for India, and they were putting a spoke in the wheel of freedom by asking for separate electorates and safeguards for the Muslims. The British people had no idea whatsoever of the peculiar conditions prevailing in the subcontinent—that citizens did not share meals with each other and a large number of people known as depressed classes were being treated as menials—for such things were not known in the West. The type of Government that the National Congress was asking for and which the Labour Party was openly favouring would not have meant freedom for the Muslims in India. Even the Hindu depressed classes, headed by Dr Ambedkar, were apprehensive of complete caste Hindu domination.

Just before Father's final decision, I could not sleep one night and early next morning I went to Father's room and said to him: 'For the first time in my life, even I am apprehensive. Do you really think that you should take this step?' He replied:

> Darling, you know how much I have thought over it before I have come to this ultimate decision, for I consciously feel that if the full case of the Muslims is not placed before the Simon Commission at

> this critical juncture, when the Labour Government is in the saddle, my nation will have to suffer for decades to come. Would I have any right to leadership if I had not the courage to give a lead to the nation when it is required, even if I have to stand alone? Remember, child, that a true leader must not be led by public opinion and should have the courage to face the people if he genuinely and sincerely feels that, unfortunately, they are not understanding the problems that are facing them. In politics, if the risk involved means the very existence of a nation at stake, the necessary step for saving it has to be taken at any and every cost. If there has to be an unfortunate split in the national organization for such an important reason, it has to be faced and *Insha Allah* (Godwilling), within a year or two you will see them all coming into line with me.

His prophecy was fulfilled when the All Parties Conference was held in Delhi in 1928 under the presidentship of His Highness the Aga Khan and it was recognized as one of the most representative gatherings of Indian Muslims.

The Conference in Lahore was held in the Habibia Hall, Islamia College. Allama Muhammad Iqbal was elected Secretary and Father as President of the Muslim League. Father's Muslim League worked very hard and the Muslim case was placed before the Simon Commission with great force in every province. Soon after the Conference, in January 1928, Father came in for a severe attack of pneumonia which later caused his death, because of a small patch of infection in the lung that could never be cured. I can never forget those moments when, sitting by his side, listening to his delirious talk in high fever, I heard him calling out: 'No, Jinnah no! You and I have the same end in view; we love our nation, let us be one', and 'Jinnah, why can't we work together, you and I, who are both fighting for the future of the Muslim nation?' Even the European nurses would ask me questions about what he was saying, and with great difficulty we had to pacify him so that he could go to sleep. With fever-filled eyes he would look at me and say: 'Ara, you do believe, don't you, that I am doing all this for the good of my nation?'

What grieved Father most was the Muslim Nationalist papers writing, and his opponents saying on platforms as before, that Father had brought about a split in the national organization because he wanted to please the British Government. Did they ever think for a single minute what Father could want from the British? He had held the highest office that any Indian could hold in India at that time, and had been awarded the highest titles that had been given to an Indian. He was earning ten times more than the pay of any office that the British could give him. Why, then, should he go out of his way to please them against the interests of his own nation? A large number of outstanding Hindus were cooperating with the Simon Commission in spite of the Congress opposition. Did any of their papers use such language against their leaders? No, because they were wise enough to understand that all schools of thought, extremists, non-cooperators and cooperators, were required to work in every sphere without being opposed by each other in order to achieve success. In fact, to achieve independence, all sections had to collaborate with one another behind the scenes and different tactics had to be employed to gain the objective. If only we could have taken a leaf out of their book! Meanwhile, the National Congress and the Muslim League were working together and Mr Jinnah was leaving no stone unturned to bring about a settlement between the two nations.

In 1928, a committee was appointed by the Indian National Congress, with Pundit Moti Lal Nehru as its President, to formulate proposals for a new Reforms Scheme for India. In their report, this committee recommended joint electorates without any reservation of seats for any minority, including the Muslims, and majority governments in Bengal and the Punjab were not conceded by them. The publication of this report made the Muslims furious and even Mr Jinnah was very much disappointed with the recommendations. Father had been working hard and advising the Aga Khan to hold an all-parties conference, and eventually he succeeded. The conference was held in Delhi in December 1928, and the following proposals were formulated:

1. The Government of India should be federal.
2. Residuary powers to vest in the Provinces and States.
3. Any Bill opposed by three-fourths members of any community present should not be proceeded with.
4. Right of separate electorates of Muslims to remain intact till they themselves give it up.
5. One-third representation of Muslim members in the Central Legislature.
6. Retention of the present basis of representation in the provinces where the Muslims are in a minority.
7. No majority to be converted into a minority or an equality.
8. Reforms be introducted in Balochistan and the NWFP.
9. Separation of Sindh.
10. Reservation for Muslims in the services.
11. Protection of Muslim culture, language, religion and education, personal laws, and *auqaf*.
12. Proper representation to Muslims in Education Department of the Government.
13. No change in the Constitution of India to be brought about without the willing consent of the Provinces.
14. No change in the Constitution of India to be brought about without the willing consent of the Indian States.

They later became Jinnah's Fourteen Points. The Ali brothers and Nawab Muhammad Ismail, who had gone to Calcutta to attend the All-Parties Convention called by the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, left Calcutta and came to Delhi to attend the Muslim All-Parties Conference. There is no doubt that Muslim mass opinion was against Mr Jinnah's acceptance of joint electorates in the Peace Conference of 20 March 1927.

The All-Parties Conference had thrown a challenge to Mr M.A. Jinnah, asking him to make the Congress agree to the Muslim majorities of even two or three in the legislatures in the two major Muslim majority provinces, so that all could join hands and place a joint demand for independence before the British Government. The Indian National Congress and the

Jinnah section of the Muslim League were holding their sessions simultaneously in Calcutta, and the Congress leaders refused to agree to Mr Jinnah's points. Perhaps the Almighty God wanted Pakistan to come into existence, otherwise Mr Jinnah's thirty years of whole-hearted efforts to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity would not have failed. He had believed in it and worked for it, genuinely and sincerely. During the Budget session of the Central Legislative Assembly in March 1929, my husband and I arranged for Father and Jinnah to meet and spend an evening together in our Assembly quarter, 17 Windsor Place, New Delhi. Unfortunately, just a couple of days before this, Ruttie Jinnah had died. Both men dined at our place and talked until twelve o'clock at night, and the two Muslim Leagues became one. It was the proudest day of my life and a dream come true. The two Muslim Leagues joined hands, Father was elected President of the joint League and Jinnah left for London in May 1928.

The two years of our work as members of the Muslim delegation to the First and Second Round Table Conference proved to us beyond any shadow of doubt that the Muslim nation was lucky indeed to have both Father and Jinnah combined as their leaders, and what a perfect combination it was! Mr Jinnah, with his outstanding ability and analytical mind, and Father, with his unique grasp of things and a constructive turn of mind, together they formed complete and perfect whole, and blessed was the nation for whom they worked.

The All-Parties National Convention organized by the Indian National Congress met in Calcutta in December 1928, and the Muslim League Committee put forward some suggestions which were placed before the Sub-Committee appointed by the National Convention in the form of amendments to the Nehru Report. They asked, firstly, that thirty-three or one-third representation in the Central Legislature be given to the Muslims; secondly, that the Muslim majority in the population in the Punjab and Bengal be given repesentation on population basis for ten years, the principle to be reconsidered after that period; and thirdly, that residual powers should be vested in the provincial legislatures and should not be given to the Centre.

The Convention Sub-Committee rejected all these proposals, and Mr Jinnah placed them before the open session of the Convention on 28 December 1928. A controversial debate ensued in which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr Jayakar took part. The proposals were put to vote and lost, and Mr Jinnah returned depressed to the Muslim League Session, which was being held simultaneously. The Indian National Congress recommended that a new constitution on the basis of the Nehru Report be framed and given to India before 31 December 1929, failing which a campaign of non-violent non-cooperation would be started. This decision after almost all the Muslim leaders, including Mr Jinnah, had rejected the Nehru Report was most surprising. How could independence be achieved without Hindu-Muslim unity and without a united demand put forward by all the races living in India?

The Punjab Government asked me to serve on the Punjab Board of Film Censors in 1926 and I remained a member of the Board until 1956, except during my absence for a number of years when I went to Delhi. We spent the summer of 1927 in Mussoorie, where we met a large number of well-known families from United Provinces and some of the Indian States, and some members of the Tyabji family.

After eight years in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, Mian Shah Nawaz was elected a member of the Central Assembly and was also appointed Secretary of the Muslim League Assembly Party.

Mian Shah Nawaz was much more nationalistically inclined than Father and there were discussions in the house between them. Father would try to make him understand the Muslim point of view from his own angle. Moreover, he wanted him not to use strong language in his speeches, especially in the Punjab Assembly. Shah Nawaz and I had a great deal in common. We were both interested in politics and he believed in the emancipation of women and was always ready to help me in my work for securing rights for women. In his branch of the family, he was the first to will his property according to Muslim Law and my daughters and I inherited the property. His legislative

work for sixteen years, eight years in the Punjab and eight years in the Central Assembly, was of a high calibre.

In 1926, Mother had received a circular letter from Mrs Margaret Cousins, pointing out the immediate necessity for organizing an All-India Women's Association to achieve and safeguard the rights of women and to work for their general advancement. We replied by welcoming the proposal and each province was asked to convene a provincial conference to elect delegates who would represent them in an all-India gathering. Mrs Miles Irving (later, Lady Miles Irving) and I, with the help of the other ladies, organized a conference in Lahore, and twelve delegates were elected. An all-India gathering was held at Poona under the presidentship of the Maharani of Baroda and the All-India Women's Conference was brought into existence. A Standing Committee was elected and Mrs Kamla Devi Chattopadhya was chosen as General Secretary. The next year, the annual session of the Conference was held in Delhi, and Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal presided; I attended the session as one of the elected delegates from the Punjab. The Budget session of the Central Assembly was on and the Simon Commission had also arrived in New Delhi, so we decided to send the Commission members an invitation to attend the inaugural session of the Women's Conference. The invitation was accepted and Sir John Simon, the Chairman, and Lord Burnham attended. The meeting was an eye-opener for them, because it was not only attended by most of the prominent women leaders from all over the subcontinent, but the women who spoke on the plaform, like Mrs Sarojini Naidu and Mrs Kamla Devi Chattopadhya were brilliant speakers. Sir John Simon himself told me that the sentence written in the Simon Report that 'the key of India's progress lies in the hands of its women', was exactly what he had felt after attending the Women's Conference. After the session the next day, when the Conference proceedings began, Begum Hamid Ali of the Tyabji family was asked to translate the speeches delivered in English for the Delhi audience. On the second day, the Begum of Bhopal called me to the platform and said that she could not understand

the Bombay Urdu and asked me to help with the translation, and for the next two days I had to translate the speeches. On the last day when Lady Irvin, the Vicereine, was also present, it was decided to create a fund for the Conference and with it to start a model Home Science Institution in New Delhi. The Director of Public Instruction in Bengal had thrown a challenge to the women workers to show them, by an example, the type of education that they required for women in India. That challenge having been taken up by them, the women leaders were anxious to organize a Home Economics Institution. Mrs Sarojini Naidu made a fervent appeal for funds. While she was speaking, I was wondering how I was going to translate, word for word her extempore speeches, as it was so eloquent. However, I did my best, and Her Highness congratulated me about it.

I was very much interested in the All-India Women's Conference and worked in it in different capacities until Partition. I was President of the Provincial Branch for a number of years, an elected member of the Central Standing Committee, and a Vice-President of the Conference.

Meeting Kamla Devi Chattopadhya during the Conference had been quite an experience and a pleasure. She was decidedly one of the ablest women in India, an outstanding parliamentary speaker, and a brilliant writer. Having a great deal in common, we became good friends and I invited her to visit Lahore. She accepted the invitation and we spent a fortnight together in my parents' house. During her stay, she addressed a public meeting at which Father presided. Her speech was greatly admired, and Father in his concluding remarks told the audience that he had taken the step of bringing the women of his family out of *purdah* hesitatingly, but he was happy to declare on that platform that during the ten years that they had spent out of seclusion, he had not had a single cause of complaint.

After the conclusion of the Conference, I received a telephone message from the private secretary of the Begum of Bhopal, asking me to have tea with her. The Begum and I spent the afternoon together and she deplored the fact that the All-India Muslim Ladies' Conference, that had been the first all-India

women's organization in the subcontinent and had done excellent work for a couple of years, had become stagnant. She asked me to take up the secretaryship and to help rejuvenate it. She and I agreed wholeheartedly that it was essential for the Muslim women to have an association of their own, and at the same time take part in the All-India Women's Conference. I requested Her Highness to excuse me from taking up the secretaryship, as Begum Nafis Dulhan Sherwani, then Secretary, was a good friend of ours. I placed my services for helping to re-organize the Conference at her disposal, and advised Her Highness to convene an all-India Muslim women's meeting in Bhopal, so that unitedly we should put new life into the Muslim Ladies' Conference. She asked me to prepare a list of women from every province who ought to be invited. Her Highness was very kind to me, and I spent a couple of hours with her daily for three days. She had a unique personality, coupled with a vast breadth of vision and ability. I can never forget her gracious affection and goodness to me. Soon after that the news of her demise was received, and it was a great blow for the whole nation.

In 1927, while we were in Mussoorie, two articles had appeared in Hindu papers full of inflammatory material against Islam; Muslims became infuriated and there was great resentment all over the country. The Government was approached to prosecute the authors, which they did in a case which became known as the Vartman Case. The Punjab Government engaged Father for the prosecution and his arguments in that case, which went on for over three weeks, were considered memorable; the courtroom used to overflow with people every day. Some of his utterances became bywords of the Muslim nation, especially the passages explaining the tenets criticized.

In the Central Assembly, the tussle between Fazl-i-Hussain and Shah Nawaz continued, and one day Sir James Crera, Home Member, said to me that he would very much like to know why Fazl-i-Hussain and Shah Nawaz, who had been together at Cambridge and had even been in the same College, were always

at loggerheads with each other. He asked smilingly: 'Did they have a fight over a girl in London?' I laughed, and said that he had better ask them about it. The two families were the best of friends socially and Lady Fazl-i-Hussain was just like a sister to my mother. When the Labour Commission was appointed and Mr Kabiruddin Ahmad was given preference over Shah Nawaz from among the Muslim members of the Central Assembly, it was very disheartening, and I asked my husband to see Mian Fazl-i-Hussain and try to come to a settlement with him. He replied:

> Ara, this is a certain policy that is being followed, and I am not the only victim of it. Sheikh Abdul Qadir, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Malik Barkat Ali, Mian Abdul Aziz, and others who possess outstanding abilities and personalities have been victimized. Gone are the days when leaders used to help able young men of their community to come forward and learn to stand with them during their life-time, so that a second and a third line should form to take over from them when they were gone or when they held senior posts.

All the same, he went to see Fazl-i-Hussain, but returned depressed.

The British Government had come to the conclusion that able and independent men in professions should not be encouraged in public life and helped to hold key positions, and instead of them sons of the *zamindars* should be brought forward to take up responsible positions in the political sphere. Such persons would be under the influence of revenue authorities in every district, would not be in a position to take up independent lines of action, and would have to be under the heels of the officials because of their vested landed interests.

Mr Rajpal wrote a book named *Rangila Rasool* and a young Muslim named Ilm Din killed him. He was tried and hanged and the Muslims wanted to bury him as a martyr. The Government, being afraid of a riot, would not hand over the body to the people in Lahore. There was great resentment over it and a serious situation developed which was likely to lead to

bloodshed. Father went to see the Governor, Sir Malcolm Hailey, and advised him not to let things get out of hand by further refusal. The Governor replied: 'Shafi, I will order the body to be handed over to you, on condition that there will be no disturbance of peace and no further trouble.' Father had been awakened by Muslims from the city early that morning and, the situation being tense, he did not have even a cup of tea before seeing the Governor. He accepted the responsibility, went straight to the mortuary and took charge of the body. Thousands of people were waiting outside Government House to know the outcome of Father's efforts. The news that Father had succeeded in bringing the body personally spread like wild-fire and over a lakh of persons assembled in the University grounds for the funeral prayers. When the prayers were over and the funeral was proceeding to the burial ground, he fainted twice, as he had not taken even one drop of water since morning, but he would not leave the procession until the final rites were over and people had dispersed peacefully.

In 1928, my parents went on a trip to Europe and Father came into personal contact with members of His Majesty's Government and leading politicians with whom he, His Highness the Aga Khan, Syed Ameer Ali, Sir Muhammad Rafique, and others had a number of consultations. Such contacts with British parliamentarians gave him a further insight into their way of thinking and he did all that lay in his power to explain the peculiar circumstances prevailing in the subcontinent. He realized more than ever before that a great deal of work had to be done to make the British Government and people understand how important were safeguards for the minorities before full independence could be given to India.

My sister's family and mine spent the summer at Dalhousie. Seven houses were rented by a number of members of the Mian family and our time there was spent together very pleasantly. About thirty-four of us went in a party to Khajyar, a picturesque place on the way to Chamba State, and Bashir wrote a long limerick about all of us. The news of Tazi's having passed the Matriculation examination in the first division was received there

and we celebrated the occasion. She also won the first prize in the All-India Inter-University Debate in Lahore.

Rai Bahadur Har Bilas Sharda proposed a bill in the Central Assembly for fixing the age of consent for the marriage of boys and girls. A Select Committee of the Legislature, known as the Age of Consent Committee, was appointed which included Shah Nawaz. The Committee toured the whole of India and witnesses appeared before them everywhere. The Report of the Committee was surprising and people learnt for the first time that there were nearly ten million girls married in India under the age of fifteen, a couple of lakhs at the age of one, three and ten years, especially in the South, and that conditions were deplorable. There was not much child-marriage amongst the Muslims, except in Bengal, because the age was already fixed for them by their religion. My husband was the only Muslim member supporting the Bill in the Assembly. When he was speaking in the House, one of the members called out that it was the influence behind the *purdah* which was making him support the Bill. He had pointed out the immediate necessity of enacting the legislation for everyone, irrespective of religion, as there was plenty of child-marriage amongst the Muslims in Bengal and some in practically every province. Most of us women workers filled the Assembly galleries for three days while the debate was on and although I had to attend an important dinner party, I did not leave the House until the Bill was passed late in the evening, as we had promised to garland Mr Har Bilas Sharda when it was through.

I was elected Vice-President of the Social Reforms Conference and was one of the members of the Reception Committee which was formed in Lahore when the 42nd session of the Reforms Conference was held there in 1929. Since 1921, I had been speaking in different mixed gatherings of men and women at Simla, Delhi, and Lahore.

Lord Irwin took over from Lord Reading as Viceroy in 1927. After four months' leave, Lord Irwin returned to India on 31 October and the following declaration was issued:

> The goal of British policy was stated in the declaration of August 1917, to be that of providing for the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. As I recently pointed out, my own instrument of instructions from the King Emperor expressly states that it is His Majesty's will and pleasure that the plans made by Parliament in 1919 should be the means by which British India may attain its due place among his Dominions. Ministers of the Crown, moreover, have more than once publicly declared that it is the desire of the British Government that India should in the fullness of time take her place in the Empire in equal partnership with the Dominions. But in view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be made regarding the intentions of the British Government in enacting the Statute of 1919, I am authorized on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that, in their judgement, it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status.

Lord Irwin's declaration further referred to Sir John Simon's letter to the Premier, in which he had made suggestions of what might be required after the report of the Statutory Commission and the Indian Central Committee had been published, but before that stage was reached, the Joint Parliamentary Committee would be setting up a conference in which His Majesty's Government should meet representatives both of British India and of the States for the purpose of seeking the greatest possible measure of agreement for the final proposals which it would later be the duty of His Majesty's Government to submit to Parliament. It further said:

> ...by this means, it may subsequently prove possible on these grave issues to submit proposals to Parliament which may command a wide measure of general assent. It is not necessary for me to say how greatly I trust that the action of His Majesty's Government may evoke response from and enlist the concurrence of, all sections of opinion in India and I believe that all who wish India well, wherever and whoever they are, desire to break through the webs

of mistrust that have lately closed the relations between India and Great Britain.

Lord Irwin's declaration appeared to satisfy the leaders of different parties, and meetings were arranged to consider it. Those belonging to M.A. Jinnah's school of thought assembled in Bombay in Sir Chiman Lal Setalvad's chambers and issued the following statement:

> We have carefully considered the statement issued by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government and we are of the opinion that the declaration that the natural issue of Indian constitutional progress is the attainment of Dominion status is satisfactory. We appreciate the fundamental change of procedure whereby the representatives of India will be invited to meet His Majesty's Government in conference for the purpose of arriving at the greatest possible measure of agreement regarding the proposals to be submitted to Parliament for the attainment of Dominion status by India, and thereby reaching a solution which might carry the willing assent of political India. We trust that the representatives of India who will be invited to meet His Majesty's Government will be such as will command the confidence of the people of India.

This statement was signed by M.A. Jinnah, Chiman Lal Setalvad, M.R. Jayakar, Sarojini Naidu, Bhulabhai J. Desai, Chuni Lal Mehta, Parshotam Das Thakurdas, and M.C. Chagla among others.

The Indian National Congress met at Lahore on 31 December 1929, and decided to launch a civil disobedience movement, including non-payment of taxes, and work for complete independence.

The British Government at last decided to convene a Round Table Conference, composed of British and Indian representatives, to sit in London to discuss and formulate proposals for further reforms. Representatives from all over India were asked to travel to London, and fourteen Muslims were invited. There were nearly 60,000 Indians at that time in jails, including the leaders of the Congress. After the announcement

of the Round Table Conference, the officials contacted them, but they refused to cooperate. In April 1930, when Father was engaged in a sensational case in Sindh and my husband was acting as his junior, we suddenly received news that my younger brother, Muhammad Iqbal, was sick in England. Whilst studying at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, Iqbal had developed a septic throat and fever which he could not get rid of. My elder brother, Muhammad Rafi, a well-qualified lawyer, had taken charge of Father's heavy work in Lahore. The Sindh case was at a critical stage and Father had been conducting it for over three months, so it was very difficult for him to leave India. It was decided that Mother and I should leave for London at once and Father should join us later. He had already accepted membership of the Indian delegation which was being sent to the Imperial Conference of 1930 by the Government. Mother and I, with my son Ahmad Shah Nawaz, who was then only seven years of age, left for London on 22 April 1930. Iqbal met us at Victoria Station, London, and we were greatly relieved to find that he was looking well. As soon as his tonsils were removed he got rid of the temperature and we went to Frankfurt, where he was checked up thoroughly and on the doctors' advice we took him to Switzerland for six weeks.

During our stay in London I visited a number of art galleries and many famous places. In the National Art Gallery, Hobema's painting *The Avenue of Trees* simply gripped me and I could not take my eyes off it. The first day that I walked in Piccadilly Circus, I could not understand why people were rushing, rather than walking, in the streets, and I asked my brother why they were in such a hurry; had there been an accident? He smiled and said that this was the West and not the East. People were rushing to their work and on different business, not because of any emergency; the Western nations knew the value of time, they conserved it and put every moment to good use. It made me think of how people vegitated in our country and how much time was lost in sleeping or gossiping.

On our return from Frankfurt, Father met us in Paris on 5 July 1930, and after spending a couple of days there we went to St.

Moritz, Switzerland. In Paris, we visited the famous palaces of Versailles, Fontainbleau, and others, and attended the Opera, the Lido, and Follies Bergéres. I spent practically a whole day in the Louvre and sat for about two and half hours before Ingress' painting *La Source*. Iqbal, who was accompanying me, was fed up and said that I would be locked up in the Louvre if I did not get out at once. We used to spend much of our time in the Bois de Bologne and other well-known gardens.

In Paris we stayed at the Grand Hotel where my son, Ahmad, became a favourite of the Hotel staff. The head waiter, who lived in the country, used to bring a branch of cherries from his own garden every morning for Ahmad. A rich lady staying in the hotel, who had taken a fancy to Ahmad and used to play with him most of the time, asked Father to give the child to her. She said that she had no children and plenty of money, and that she would promise to give the child the best education and provide every possible comfort in life for him. Father told her that he was my only son, well-provided for, and that there could be no question of my parting with the child.

In St. Moritz, we stayed at the Kulm Hotel. The hotel was situated in a picturesque corner of the town and we visited most of the well-known places round about St. Moritz and Zürich. We went to see a glacier, where Father caught a chill and started a temperature. The doctor advised him to go back to London, and Iqbal and I stayed on for a week before joining our parents. It snowed in St. Moritz in July and it had become very cold.

Father had arranged with the Viceroy that I should act as his honorary private secretary in connection with the Imperial Conference of 1930. I was reluctant to do so and wanted to return home, but as it was Father's great wish that I should work with him, I stayed on. In London, we met our good friends Mr and Mrs Jai Gopal Sethi from Lahore and we all arranged to spend the next two months on the Continent, in Belgium. We spent three weeks in Blankenberge and three weeks in Brussels and managed to see most of the places worth visiting in that country: Grotto de Hun, Burgess and Ghent, Waterloo, and other such historic places. I visited many art galleries and in Mamluke

Museum, Brussels, I was much impressed by a painting of a young girl's face, half of which was hid in a gauze veil. In the Hotel de Ville, the Town Hall of Brussels, I saw a beautiful painting on the ceiling of one of the committee rooms of a goddess who had in her hand a bugle which pointed towards every corner of the room. We visited the house of the famous painter Van Dyke, where Ahmad insisted on sitting in one of his chairs. When we went to see the Palais-de-Justice, I was surprised to learn that the average number of murder cases in Belgium at that time was only fourteen a year, and that capital punishment had been abolished. The people were very hospitable; we made friends wherever we went and met with a great deal of kindness. During our stay in Blankenberge, I received an invitation from the Secretary of State for India to serve on the Round Table Conference as a representative of Indian women. We decided that my daughter, Tazi, should join us in London. Mian Abdul Aziz, one of the Commissioners of the Punjab government, had been placed on the secretariat of the Conference and it was arranged for Tazi to travel with him and his wife. We returned to London on 17 September. London gave Father and me a memorable reception and the papers were very kind indeed.

Throughout my four months travelling in the European countries during the summer of 1930, when I visited the West for the first time, I had been pondering over the way of life in the towns, especially in the ports. Brighton, Ostend, Blankenberge, Nice, Cannes, Grasse, La Touque, everywhere I had seen people up and about and active until two or three in the morning, swimming, boating, and dancing. A very healthy life, no doubt, but hardly any time for thought and meditation. I would imagine the life of those who spent twenty-four hours in a mad rush and would in my mind compare it with the lives of the people in the East, who lazed away day and night, spending their time either in prayer and meditation or sitting, gossiping, and smoking *huqqas*. In one case, the body flourished but the spirit was sleeping, and in the other the body vegetated and the mind and spirit became too alert. What the world required was

individuals with healthy minds and good physique. How could such a combination be brought about to produce individuals of that calibre? East and West had to combine in order to produce the desired results. Another matter that made me sad was the undignified attitude of young women craving for admiration. Once in La Touque, where we spent a weekend, I saw some of the most beautiful and cultured young women stooping to cheap behaviour. There were a large number of girls and very few men in the dance hall and I would like to quote the lines (published in *Sharif Bibi*, a Lahore vernacular paper, in 1931) which I wrote in the diary that I kept of my four months' tour of the Continent.

> Queens of culture and beauty, why are you acting like this? Did you not learn in your mothers' laps, as we girls in the East were taught, that a woman must never court the admiration of men? If it comes, she should take it as her due and never be flattered by it. If it does not, she should never crave for it, or stoop down to get it.

The Imperial Conference began its work at the end of September 1930, and it was a historic session. The Statute of Westminster was discussed and passed and the British Empire became 'a free association of independent states, a British Commonwealth of Nations'. The Irish delegation walked out of the Conference as they, too, wanted the right to secede.

Tazi arrived in London on 12 October which was her eighteenth birthday. The receptions, dinner parties, lunches, teas, suppers, and other entertainments arranged for the delegates of the Imperial Conference by the Government, by prominent personalities, by the guilds and City of London were most interesting and informative. We met almost all the Dominion Premiers and were impressed by the ability of some of them. The Indian delegation had arrived in London when the Imperial Conference 1930 was in session. The delegation, composed as it was of fine personalities, well-versed in constitutional law and the ins and out of politics, came into contact with leading personalities from the Dominions, most of whom did not know

how far India had already advanced on the road of constitutional reforms. Father and I did our best to explain the case of Indian constitutional advance for freedom, and asked for their kind help. I had a long talk with Mr Bennett, the Prime Minister of Canada, who asked me most intelligent questions, and so gave me the opportunity of discussing the question of freedom for the subcontinent, and asking for his support. What surprised me most was that none of them knew anything about the advances already made. Even a person like Mr Bennett, whom I considered one of the ablest of the Dominion Premiers, said to me: 'You people are asking that India should become a fully-fledged Dominion. How can that be possible when so far you have enjoyed only a small measure of reforms?' I smiled and gave him a detailed history of the reforms given piecemeal to the subcontinent from 1882 onwards, and tried to prove that the last stage of giving full responsible government, both in the provinces and at the Centre, had arrived. He was surprised and volunteered to give all possible help.

Father invited all the Dominion Premiers to a dinner party to meet Mr Ramsay MacDonald, the Prime Minister, at the Carlton Hotel, where we were staying. I acted as his private secretary that evening. Throughout that period, acting as his secretary gave me training and experience which were very useful to me in later life. I remember an occasion when certain confidential letters had to be written. Father went on dictating and I kept on writing until about thirty-five pages had been written; then Mother intervened and said that we must stop. Although I was tired, I continued to write until the letters were finished and despatched.

His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner, who was the leader of the Indian delegation to the Imperial Conference became fond of my son, Ahmad. Being an old friend of our family, he used to take care of us all when Father was busy with committee work. The Maharaja was a perfect gentlemen and had an impressive personality; he stood out as the ablest of all the ruling Princes.

The opening ceremony of the Round Table Conference was performed on 6 November 1930, by His Majesty King George V. Attended by the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, the Dominion Premiers, the Princes of India, and so many other outstanding leaders, it was indeed a unique historic occasion. King George delivered the inaugural speech in a clear and resonant voice and the proceedings of the Conference began the next day.

I made my first speech in the Conference within the first week of the session. I have never liked writing a speech, except the jotting down of the cardinal points, but as I had to speak on behalf of the women of India, Mrs Subbarayan, my Hindu colleague, insisted on seeing the speech beforehand and I wrote it down and took it to show her. After reading it, she told me that, having been educated in England, she knew the British public and she thought that the speech was too emotional to be liked. I was upset because I had written exactly what I felt, believing always that one should express one's opinions sincerely in connection with the questions under discussion. I returned to the Carlton Hotel and told Tazi about it. She said:

> Mother, speak as you feel and do not take any notice of anything the others say. If Mrs Subbarayan has no objection to the opinions and thoughts expressed by you about federation and other allied questions, then do not change the speech a great deal, but stick to the words that you have chosen.

For nearly five days, brilliant speakers and outstanding lawyers of Great Britain and India had been addressing the Conference. Father asked Mother whether I would like him to help me, and Mian Abdul Aziz sent a few notes on his own, which I never read. I thanked both of them and refrained from even talking of the speech to anyone. My speech was well received and when I sat down, a large number of notes of appreciation were passed down to me, including those of Lord Sankey, the President, Mr Ramsay MacDonald; Mr Wedgewood Benn, the Secretary of State; a number of Princes and all the leaders of the different delegations from India. After the meeting, Father came round

and I took up the note sent by him and said: 'Father, this is the most precious of all.' When I reached the hotel, my brother was replying to a telephone call, saying that he did not remember the colour of the coat I was wearing. The Secretary of State and a number of others had telephoned Mother, congratulating her on the success of my speech. On the way to the hotel, I was surprised to see placards with my photgraph and sentences from my speech, such as: 'We are trying to combine Western freedom of thought and action with Eastern restraint.' By evening, I had received congratulatory cables from New York and Spain.

During the opening session of the Round Table Conference, for over a fortnight the speeches delivered by the leaders of every section of the Indian delegation (Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs, men and women), had asked for nothing less than full Dominion Status for India. This came as a great surprise to the British Government, as well as to the public in Great Britain. To find so many persons well-versed in politics, with outstanding personalities, was an eye-opener to them, and I staunchly believe that the success of the Round Table Conference in securing such a full measure of reforms, in spite of the strong opposition of the Churchill group, was for a number of reasons. To sit across the tables, raise points, discuss and formulate proposals, meet each other's difficulties, and explain things to the satisfaction of each other made a world of difference. In my concluding speech, I meant every word when I said: 'We came with misgivings, and we are going back with a wealth of confidence and trust.' The manner in which the British Cabinet, especially the Prime Minister, tried to bring about a settlement, had taken away our doubts and suspicions, and we knew that the Labour Government was not leaving any stone unturned to make the Hindus and Muslims settle their differences.

The Muslim delegation used to meet in the Aga Khan's rooms at the Ritz Hotel at all hours of day and night, whenever necessary, and with Mr Jinnah's Fourteen Points as our goal, the delegation worked as one man. The unity of the Muslim delegation amazed the people all around and Lord Sankey, the

Lord Chancellor and President of the Conference, said to me one day: 'I had heard that the Muslims were born administrators, but I have seen it with my own eyes in the way that the Muslim delegation has worked as a team in the Conference.' The Aga Khan's influence, tact, forceful personality, and his contacts in Great Britain, and the combination of two such outstanding personalities as Father and Jinnah were a great blessing for the Muslim nation. Unfortunately, Maulana Muhammad Ali became seriously ill soon after his first very eloquent speech at the Round Table Conference, and he died shortly afterwards.

The members of the Muslim delegation used to thrash out points so as to act unitedly within and without the Conference. They were contacting friends in Great Britain and exerting their influence wherever possible in order to secure the necessary measures to protect the rights of the minorities and to achieve freedom for the subcontinent. Father used to invite prominent members of the different political parties in the British Parliament to explain the Muslim case, and the hard work that this involved affected his health considerably. In the Federal Structure Committee of the Conference, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru on one side and Father and Jinnah on the other would open the debates on constitutional issues, and long discussions would follow. Father was a member of a number of committees of the Conference and he had been placed on the Sindh Separation Committee, while Mr Jinnah was on the North-West Frontier Committee. Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum of the North-West Frontier Province came to see Father and requested him to ask for a place on the North-West Frontier Committee as well, which he did. The British Government was hesitant about giving the same measure of independence and the same status to the Frontier Province as was to be given to all the other provinces. Father threatened to walk out of the Conference if the Frontier was not given the same status; the British Government yielded and North-West Frontier Province secured its rightful place. Sahibzada often repeated this incident and always said that it was thanks to Father that the Frontier secured the same status as the other provinces.

A Minorities Committee had been set up by the Conference and Mr Ramsay MacDonald and other prominent members of his Cabinet, especially the Secretary of State for India, tried their level best to bring about a settlement between the two major nations in India, the Hindus and the Muslims. The Muslims were in bare majorities of four and six in the provinces of Bengal and the Punjab and they were demanding their majority rule under a democratic system of government in both these major provinces. The Sikhs in the Punjab were 13 per cent and the Europeans in Bengal were 11 per cent of the population. At some stage in the history of the reform schemes, Muslims had been given what was known as weightage, i.e., a little more than their percentage of the population demanded in the Assemblies of the provinces where they were in a minority. On the basis of this, the Sikhs were asking for a weightage of 30 per cent in the Punjab Provincial Legislature. If weightage was to be given, Muslims could not afford to give them more than one or two per cent of their number in the population. They pointed out, over and over again, that weightage had been given to the Muslim minorities in provinces where Hindus were in overwhelming majorities, and they would be glad to give similar privilege to the Sikhs in the Sindh and Frontier Provinces, where Muslims had substantial majorities. They could not possibly afford to do so in the Punjab and Bengal. For the sake of settlement, if they were forced to give any weightage, it could not possibly be more than one or two per cent. These negotiations went on for months and Father said in his historic speech in the Minorities Committee:

> Sardar Sampuran Singh's main ground of complaint, and this is the real point of my argument, was that, under the Government of India plan, there is a possibility of the Mussalman community, which undoubtedly constitutes a majority of the population in the Punjab, having a majority against the Hindus and Sikhs combined. That was his main ground of complaint, and it was on that account he suggested there might be civil war in the Province.
>
> Now, Sir, if the Mussalman community had adopted a similar attitude towards constitutional reforms, and if the Mussalman

community had said that all over India in the Central Government, in all the other minority provinces, the Hindus will be in the majority, and we cannot tolerate this, and there will be civil war, well, what would have been the fate of constitutional reforms in India? Surely, surely that is not the attitude that any community in India should adopt, provided they are sincere well-wishers of India's constitutional evolution towards full self-government. Either we are patriotic Indians, desirous of our country's advance towards full self-government, desirous of seeing our countrymen rising to that status to which other people have risen in their own countries, or we are Communalists pure and simple. If we are the former, then surely this is not the attitude which we should adopt in relating to the questions which are before this Committee.

You, my Hindu brethren, want full self-government for your country: you want your country to be an equal partner in the great British Commonwealth of Nations. Remember that in the world conditions which have now come into existence, no country, however rich or however powerful, can stand alone. It is for that reason that the tendency of modern international movements is towards the association of nations and countries for purposes of security, mutual help, and coordination of effort. For us, the people of India, such an association is already there in the British Commonwealth of Nations. I have all my life been convinced that the future of India lies within that Commonwealth.

If you want full self-government in your country, if you want your country to be an equal partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations, you, the majority community, who will have the control of all matters of common concern at the Centre in your hands, who will have control of the Provincial Governments in the major portion of India, you can afford to be generous; we only want you to be just and to recognize our legitimate rights and claims in the self-governing India of the future.

Believe me, without this Hindu-Muhammadan unity, all your dreams of self-government are in vain. With Hindu-Muhammadan unity you can confront the representatives of the British parties and say: 'Here is the united demand of India', and then I am perfectly certain they will see that India is now united and is in a position to conduct the affairs of self-government as an equal member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and they will be more than ready to meet you half way. But if you do not recognize the

legitimate claims of Mussalmans, and if you therefore alienate the feelings and the sympathies of this great and powerful community, all your dreams of full responsible government will be in vain; for, then, to whom is the British Parliament to transfer responsibility? To you? The Muhammadans will object. To the Muhammadans? You will object. Therefore the transfer of responsibility, whether at the Centre or in the Provinces, will become impossible unless Hindus and Mussalmans can be united, unless they are both satisfied that in the condition of things which is coming into existence, the rights of both will be secure.

I hope and pray that the Minorities Sub-Committee may conclude its deliberations by bringing about an amicable settlement and an understanding between the various groups which are represented upon it, and that in the end it may be in a position to report to the plenary Conference that the minority question in India has been solved to the satisfaction of all the groups; and I do hope that prayer of mine will not go unheeded.

(Shafi's speech—Minority Committee's Report, Round Table Conference)

About father's work the daily *Telegraph* wrote:

The gems of Sir Muhammad's extraordinary personal success have lain embedded in a political existence which could avoid the hectic in the most hectic times of our national life. A truer measure of him has not been given than was done by Lord Reading, who, in bidding farewell to his colleague on the termination of his incumbency in the Government of India, paid a compliment to his high idealism tempered by practical considerations. Yes, there is Sir Muhammad Shafi in a phrase.

It is as a Communalist that he had gained prominence. Yet, examining any of his utterances, it is impossible not to detect a submerged note of nationalism, as the advocacy of its cause realizes that the ultimate solution of the Indian problem rests in the disappearance of divided interests.

I always recall with satisfaction his protest against the disruptive tendencies of sectionalism. He looks upon himself as a guardian of the welfare of his community. In one speech above all which he made when the Dacca University was constituted—he then held the portfolio of Education in the government of India—brushing back

> the efforts which were made to exploit his communal feeling, he declared that while formerly he was a representative of the Mussalmans, he was at that moment the representative of all India and would only act as such. The sentiments embodied in those words do him eternal credit. Could only others of either community in exalted positions have set his example before them, the recent history of India would have been written differently.

and:

> Sir Muhammad Shafi is an embodiment of India's constitutional development, in whose life we observe the different stages of her upward growth. Each period of his personal advance denotes a certain specific progress made in the country's affairs. Amid passing controversies, most people will perhaps not pause to notice traits. It is, therefore, thankful to record that Sir P.S. Swaswamy Iyer said of him once: 'I found that his heart was in the right place.' It is less by his achievements than by his well-set heart that Sir Muhammad has extracted from public life the highest office that has yet been conferred on any Indian save Lord Sinha. Though he has never been known as a brilliant man, he has gone on building up success, strand upon strand, in the face of giant rivals. The legal profession, where fortune indulges her caprice, has served him well and he himself leads you to conclude that. Counter-balancing advantages, he twice refused the offer of a High Court judgeship.—With a quiet, hospitable nature, translated into a pleasant existence, Sir Muhammad Shafi has claimed to be a statesman in an age of fighters, a negotiator when war-drums have sounded. But if his accents have never been instinct with fervour, his voice, it may be laid down, has never been modulated in favour of stagnation.
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> (*Daily Telegraph, September 1930*)

Ultimately, when the issues had narrowed down and it was clear that the success of the whole Conference depended upon such a settlement, the Prime Minister decided that they should sit around a table until a final settlement could be achieved. The Minorities Committee had been sitting until late in the evening when Ramsay MacDonald adjourned the full meeting and asked a number of us, the Aga Khan, Father, Mr Jinnah, Sir Tej

Bahadur Sapru, Shastri, Jayakar, Raja Narindera Nath, Sardar Ujjal Singh, Sardar Sampuran Singh, Mrs Subbarayan, myself, and some others, to adjourn to a committee room where we sat until very late into the night, although the Prime Minister had a dinner engagement. Of the British members only Ramsay MacDonald, Wedgewood Benn, and the Dominion Secretary, J.H. Thomas were present. How sincerely these Labour leaders tried to make the Indians come to a final settlement, only those who were present at that meeting know. The Sikh representatives stuck to their demand for 30 per cent seats in the Punjab legislature and would not budge an inch from it. We women, whom the Prime Minister had specially asked to help, remonstrated with them a great deal. Raja Narindara Nath, the leader of the Hindu Mahsabha Party, was sitting next to Sardar Ujjal Singh and whenever he saw the Sardar pondering over a proposal, he would at once say to him in Punjabi: 'Ujjal Singh, you do agree, don't you?' When I begged Sardar Ujjal Singh not to wreck the Conference by such stubbornness, he told me that he was afraid of Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia. I replied that I would take the responsibility of making Majithia agree, but Raja Narindera Nath would not let him say 'yes'. On my return to Lahore, when I told Majithia about it, he said it was foolish of Ujjal Singh not to have agreed to it. The Prime Minister told the Sikhs that the first rule of a democracy was not to reduce a majority into a minority, or even to an equality, and tried his best to make the Sikhs yield and accept what was ultimately offered to them. We got up from the table in disgust and the Labour leaders came to realize who was at fault. Everywhere in England, wherever we had an opportunity of speaking, we had told the audience that a settlement was not being arrived at because Congress was not cooperating, for which prisons were full of their leaders.

I was in Europe when I had received the invitation to the Round Table Conference and so had no opportunity of contacting women leaders of my country. Mrs Subbarayan and I, the only two women members of the Conference, decided to consult some of the prominent women workers in London, and

we invited a number of them to my room to discuss questions relating to women. We decided to ask for adult suffrage, but if that was not possible to frame qualifications for franchise in such a manner that women should become a substantial portion of the electorate and should be given an effective voting strength. Moreover, we asked for reserved seats for women in all the legislatures for only two elections. The women leaders and women voters of Great Britain were exceptionally helpful and they spared no pains to ask their government to accede to our demands. Some of the members of the British Delegation told me that they had received letters signed by thousands of their women voters, asking that the proposals submitted by the women members of the Conference be accepted. Winston Churchill's party was opposing the India Bill, but the Duchess of Athol, a member of his Party, gave me a great deal of encouragement in all our demands.

In London we met many old friends and made many new ones. Mr Rab Butler, son of Sir Montague Butler, had entered the House of Commons and was Parliamentary Secretary for India. He was considered a brilliant speaker. I had met Lord and Lady Earley, Lord Reading's son and daughter-in-law, in India and I saw them a number of times in London. Lord and Lady Reading and we were good friends because of our long associations in India, and we had the pleasure of seeing a great deal of them in London.

When Ramsay MacDonald, as leader of the Labour Party, came to India, he had breakfast with Father at our house, *Iqbal Manzil*, Lahore, and then had a long talk with him. During our stay in London, we became good friends of the family, and Miss Ishabel MacDonald, his eldest daughter, and I often used to discuss women's problems. She was a member of the London County Council, a meeting of which I attended with her. She arranged for me to see a new area that was being developed outside London and I had an opportunity of studying the layout of a part of the city which was to be used for residential purposes. How I wished that we could learn something from such excellent planning!

When I was dining with the Secretary of State, Sir Samuel Hoare, one evening, Lady Maud Hoare, his wife, suggested I might like to see her husband's Constituency, which was Chelsea; and Lady Melchet, mother of Lady Earley, took me to see an infant welfare centre and a combined créche in the same area of London. There I was introduced to a number of ladies by Lady Melchet, who said:

> Begum Shah Nawaz, these are the selfless and unknown workers who have built the nation. All of them are near relations of Lords and Peers who have devoted themselves to social service and have put in years of remarkable, unpaid and unknown work.

I could not help thinking how much our nation would benefit if only the women of our better families were to use their spare time quietly in such a manner.

Her Majesty Queen Mary invited twelve of us, including the wives of the ruling Princes, Mother, Lady Hydari, Begum Mehdi Yar Jang, Mrs Subbarayan and myself, to tea at Buckingham Palace. She took us around to see the four rooms in the palace that were decorated with gifts received from India. Afterwards, as I was sitting and talking to the Duchess of York (now Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother), the present Queen, who was then four years old, came, stood before her mother and asked: 'Where is Granny?' The Duchess told her to go and look for her and we continued talking. The Lady-in Waiting, Lady Carmichel, came to inquire whether she would like her to bring another lady to talk to her, but the Duchess replied that she was quite happy talking to me. We were sitting in the picture gallery of Buckingham Palace; when Princess Elizabeth had looked all over it, she came back and said to the Duchess: 'Granny couldn't be under this sofa, could she?' We both laughed.

Mr Anthony Eden asked Mr Jayakar and myself to dine with him in the restaurant of the Houses of Parliament one evening when the House was in session. A reception was being held at Lord Reading's house to meet the Prince of Wales (now the Duke of Windsor) at 10 p.m. and we were to attend it. Mr Eden

had invited other members of Parliament and Mr Lloyd George was to join us a little later on, as he was speaking in the House. We were discussing a number of important issues, and Mr Jayakar and I did not notice time passing until suddenly I saw my watch and realized that it was almost ten o'clock. Mr Jayakar and I quickly took our leave, and so I did not have the pleasure of meeting Mr Lloyd George. It took us nearly an hour to reach Lord Reading's house because of the heavy traffic, and just as we were going up the stairs I met the Secretary of State and Mrs Wedgewood Benn coming down. He said: 'Begum, you are very late and most of the people have been asking about you. The Prince is still there.' As soon as I entered the room, Mother came forward and said that I should not have been so late, and that Begum Aga Khan had been enquiring about me. I went towards the Begum and, just as I was shaking hands with her, Lord Reading spoke my name; I turned round and saw the Prince of Wales. Lord Reading presented me, and His Royal Highness and I talked for some time. I met a number of other very interesting personalities before going on from there to a supper party at the Savoy Hotel, a mixed function arranged by the women's organizations at which Tazi and Iqbal joined me.

My daughter Tazi had contacted a number of writers and poets in London and the Poets' Club invited her to a dinner at which she was asked to recite a few of her own poems. One of the poems, entitled *What is the use of it all*? was accepted by the *Spectator* for publication. They sent her a cheque for three guineas, which she donated to the National Congress; she had great nationalistic tendencies at that time. Mother arranged a ladies' party at the Carlton Hotel and a large number of prominent women attended it. I was introducing them to Lady Astor, one by one, when I came to Devika Rani and explained that she was one of our film stars. Lady Astor exclaimed: 'What is it that India has not even a film star!' Tazi asked Mr Galsworthy to lunch with us one day and Mr Epstein, the sculptor, came to tea. She was very anxious to meet George Bernard Shaw and this Lady Astor arranged for her. She invited

George Bernard Shaw, Lord Lothian and a few other distinguished people to a quiet dinner which Tazi and I attended. Mumtaz was asked to recite two of her poems, and during her conversation with Mr Shaw he remarked that the child was 'diabolically clever' and he would not like to be in her mother's shoes. In another of Lady Astor's small dinner parties I was sitting next to the Crown Prince of Sweden when he said to me:

> Begum, you people of the British Commonwealth, who belong to so many different races and creeds, have a God-sent chance of making this Commonwealth, which is now a free association of independent states, a reality, and small countries like mine would love to join it.

On another occasion, Lady Astor invited fifty women who were the heads of most of the professions in London, Miss Amy Johnson, and myself; at dinner she seated Miss Johnson and me at her left and right. A reception had been arranged after dinner to which 950 other ladies had been invitied to meet us all. I considered Lady Astor an outstanding personality amongst the women of Great Britain. She was a charming hostess, an impressive personality, a born parliamentarian, very charitable, and popular with all.

A plenary session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Allahabad in December 1930, under Allama Muhammad Iqbal's presidentship. He had been working for Hindu-Muslim unity for a long time and had been helping to formulate proposals for a settlement. In his presidential address, Allama Iqbal placed before the public the principle which in his opinion would solve the communal problem. Lala Lajpat Rai had previously expressed the same idea, but Iqbal gave it an authoritative sanction. He said: 'To base a constitution on the conception of a homogeneous India, or to apply to India the principles dictated by British democratic sentiments, is unwittingly to prepare her for a civil war.' He felt that the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Sindh, and Balochistan should be amalgamated into one Muslim state and

be given 'self-government, within the British Empire or without it. The formation of a consolidated Indian Muslim state appears to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of north-west India'.

The Muslim League session was held when the Round Table Conference was in session in London, and Iqbal's declaration at Allahabad was mentioned by one of the Hindu speakers and was referred to by the Prime Minister. Father placed the Muslim case from a nationalistic angle before the Minorities Sub-Committee soon after this declaration; he said that Muslims were thinking on the lines of a separate state because of Hindu intransigence. It was considered a memorable speech and he spoke for nearly three hours. Even the Prime Minister remarked: 'Sir Muhammad, other communities have not such an able advocate as you.'

The united leadership of Father and Jinnah made for success. With the First Round Table Conference drawing to an end and the Prime Minister about to deliver his final speech, the delegations were naturally anxious to know what Great Britain was prepared to give India in the way of further reforms and what safeguards would be incorporated to protect the rights of the minorities. A couple of days before the final session of the Conference we came to know that, while full provincial autonomy would be granted, Muslim interests might not be safeguarded. An emergency meeting was called by the Aga Khan and a letter was written and despatched to the Prime Minister, who had gone to his country house, *Chequers*, for the weekend. A reply was received the same evening from the Attorney-General and we met early the next morning in the Aga Khan's room. Mr Jinnah had been delayed and the reply had been discussed and approved when he arrived. Mr Jinnah went through it and pointed out a flaw where none seemed to exist, a flaw that would have meant annulment of most of what had been conceded. All were amazed and Father at once supplied the perfect alternative phrase. The Communal Award announced by the British Government proved to be based mostly on Father's speech in the Minorities Committee. We were jubilant

to find that the Muslims had been awarded 51 per cent seats in the legislatures of the Punjab and Bengal.

Shafi and Jinnah's brains combined with the Aga Khan's influence and sagacity and the united strength of the Muslim delegation had secured for their nation twelve of Mr Jinnah's fourteen points: Sindh and Frontier had become self-governming provinces, gaining the status which other provinces enjoyed in India.

It is to the credit of the Indian leaders that with one voice they asked for a Federation for India. Should it be a centripetal one like Canada and South Africa, or a centrifugal one like Australia and Switzerland? India, peopled as it was by so many diverse races, could not but have a centrifugal Federation and the conclusions arrived at by the Federal Structure Committee were unanimously in favour of it. In that Committee, constitutional lawyers, both British and Indian, framed and finalized the Constitution and the sum total of their deliberations gave the subcontinent a well-knit constitution. As Part I of the Constitution still required further work in settling important questions, mostly relating to the Indian States, it was decided to launch Part II, which had given India full provincial autonomy without any reservation of power in any sphere, except for the discretionary powers placed in the hands of the Governor-General and the Governors, to safeguard the rights and interests of minorities.

At the concluding session of the First Round Table Conference, both Father and I were asked to speak. Just before we said goodbye to the Prime Minister, he remarked that he did not know 'whom to congratulate more, the father or the daughter'.

I recall the return voyage home on the *Viceroy of India*; there were twenty-four princes on board the ship and a large number of delegates. One evening just before reaching the shores of India, the Commander of the ship arranged a dinner party at which a number of speeches were delivered. Few of us slept on the last night on board, and some of us sang songs. All were feeling very happy at the thought that we were carrying freedom

to our country. Unfettered Provincial Autonomy, and thereafter a full-fledged Federation had been chalked out and accepted, and there was every hope of the Indian National Congress cooperating and the doors of the prisons being opened soon.

When we reached home on 6 February 1931, Rafi asked me a question: I had had unique opportunities of meeting a large number of well-known personalities of Great Britain and of the Commonwealth—who had impressed me the most? I replied that, in my opinion, the most outstanding persons I came across were the Marquis of Lothian and Winston Churchill. Although Churchill did not agree to further reforms for India, he was undoubtedly a forceful personality. Of the Dominion Premiers, Mr Bennett of Canada had impressed me very much.

My ten months' stay abroad throughout my tour of Europe, during the historic Imperial Conference of 1930 and the Round Table Conference had helped to widen my horizon considerably; I had learnt a great deal, and had opportunities of working with some well-known personalities. Coming into contact with unique statesmen of so many countries was an education in itself. The functions that I had attended in connection with the Imperial Conference, the dinners arranged by industrial concerns and different guilds with their quaint historic customs had been very enlightening.

After our return, the *Star* wrote about Father's work:

> The services rendered by Sir Muhammad Shafi will not be forgotten easily. He was the person who put forward the Muslim case with consummate ability before the Minorities Committee. It was acknowledged by everyone that he made an unanswerable case. Other delegates, too, did remarkably well, and worked in the closest possible consort. The Delegation made a profound impression, both on the British Government and on the Hindus, precisely because it was united. The Muslim community could never have found abler, more patriotic or more influential persons that the Muslim delegates chosen to represent the community. They avoided both extremes—the extreme of fanaticism, and the extreme of 'Nationalism', or, in other words, 'Congressism.' They did not commit a single tactical mistake. The Muslim delegation alone possessed an organic unity,

and exercised an influence which rendered it the greatest, the most powerful and the most influential of all the delegations in the Conference. Jinnah, Shafi and the Aga Khan spared no efforts for the Muslim cause. Never has our community been more genuinely or more truly represented. Never has its case been put forward with greater ability, tact, fairness and foresight.

(*The Star*, 23 March 1931)

A number of meetings were held both in Delhi and Simla by the leaders of different schools of thought and organizations, where the Round Table Conference proposals were discussed. I was unanimously elected the first woman member of the All-India Muslim League Council in 1931, placed on the governing body of the All-India Red Cross Society and on the Senate of the Punjab University.

The Inter-Collegiate Society of the Punjab University asked me to address them at Government College, Lahore, to tell them about the work of the Round Table Conference and explain the salient features of the new Constitution. That morning, I received a letter signed by nearly 200 students, informing me that, if I went to the meeting, they would refuse to listen to me. I did not let Father or my husband know anything about this letter. Arriving at Government College, I went straight to the hall. Sardar Sir Jogindra Singh, a Sikh Minister of the Punjab Cabinet, was in the chair and he introduced me to the audience. The hall was packed full. I got up and said:

I was in Blankenburg, Belgium, when I received the invitation to the Round Table Conference. Holding the letter of the Secretary of State for India in my hand, I had said to myself: 'Look at the irony of fate, that when my adopted sister, Kamla Devi Chattopadhya, was in jail, I had been asked to be a member of the Indian delegation to the Round Table Conference.' I pondered over it and said to myself that she believed in securing things by non-cooperation, while I believed in striving through cooperation. She had the courage of her convictions, and the time has come for me to show that I have of mine, and, gentlemen, may be both are required to fill in the picture.

After that I spoke to them for over an hour, tracing the conclusions arrived at by the Round Table Conference and giving them the outline of the new Constitution, and the students listened to me throughout in absolute silence. A number of people congratulated me, and said that was the first speech of a cooperator, asking for cooperation, that the Lahore students had listened to in almost a year, and that too in rapt silence.

The Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference considered the proposals placed by Mrs Subbarayan and myself before the Round Table Conference, and did not agree with them. It was decided to ask for adult suffrage only, without any special privileges, and to work for equality with men in civic rights. The dates of the Second Round Table Conference were announced and the Indian National Congress decided to cooperate and attend it. The Working Committee elected Mr Gandhi as the sole representative of the Congress and Mrs Sarojini Naidu was nominated as a member of the Round Table Conference.

I met Mr Gandhi for the first time in New Delhi in March 1931, when I asked Sarojini Naidu to arrange an interview. It was in the evening, just before his prayer time. A couple of thousand people, mostly women, had gathered in the compound for prayers. I asked Mr Gandhi to help me to secure the emancipation of women. He pointed to the gathering and asked if he had not done so already. I replied that this was not sufficient. Until women got their economic independence, they would never get rid of their slave mentality. When one kept a servant, even if the keys of the whole house were handed to him, he would still be a slave, and would continue to have a slavish mentality. 'Gandhiji,' I pleaded, 'get them their rights and make them economically independent. Then sons born of and brought up by such mothers will become the forceful, spirited citizens of a great nation.' He agreed with me and promised to do his best. I found that Mr Gandhi was a very shrewd politician, a strong and impressive personality well-versed in the ways of the world, spiritually and otherwise.

A couple of weeks before I was to leave India for the Second Round Table Conferences on 15 August 1931, I received an invitation from the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, asking me to visit the League offices as a Collaborator during the annual session that year in order to study the work of the League. I learnt that fifty of us had been asked from the member countries of the world and invitations had been received by three persons in India: Mrs Brij Lal Nehru, Professor Shishadari, and myself. As my work in the Conference was not to begin before the middle of October, and the session of the League Assembly was being held in September, in consultation with Father I accepted the invitation. Father was going to be extremely busy with the work of the Federal Structure Committee in London, but my brother Iqbal had summer vacations from Oxford University, so we arranged that Mother, Iqbal, and I should go to Geneva. Iqbal met us at Marseilles and we spent nearly ten days in the south of France, visiting Nice, Cannes, Grasse and other places with Sardar and Sardarni Ujjal Singh. The picturesque scenery of the south of France left an indelible impression on my mind. Father went to London from Nice, we proceeded to Aix-les-Bains and after spending four days there we left for Geneva.

The three of us stayed at the Hotel Beau Rivage, Geneva, where the British delegation to the League Assembly, led by Lord Robert Cecil, accompanied by Lord Astor, who was also a member, was putting up; a few members of the Indian delegation to the League session were also there. On Sunday we used to go out for excursions round about Geneva and we visited a number of beautiful places for which Switzerland is famous.

We Collaborators were given every opportunity of studying the work of the League of Nations throughout the session, especially the work of the different committees. I had accepted the invitation in order to see a world organization like the League of Nations working, and if possible to get a few tips which would be useful to me in my work at the Round Table Conference. I was particularly interested in the work of the

Committee of Three, which dealt with the problems of the minorities in different countries.

The sessions were very interesting and informative. Mr Molotov, on behalf of Russia, proposed a 25 per cent cut all round in armaments before the Disarmament Conference was to meet. After he had spoken, Lord Robert Cecil followed and said that Great Britain would have no objection to the acceptance of such a proposal if France and Germany also agreed. M. Briand, head of the French delegation, did not speak that day as he had to get in touch with his government. People were keyed up to know the French reply and the next morning, when the Assembly session began, M. Briand made a brilliant and impassioned speech. The audience was enthralled for as long as he spoke, but when he had finished people found that there was hardly anything to his speech, and France had not accepted the proposals. Mr Curtis, following Briand on behalf of Germany, spoke against the proposal, which was to be expected after France's refusal. Mr Madriaga, the head of the Spanish delegation, got up and reprimanded both nations for their intransigent attitude in rejecting useful proposals which would have meant relief for the whole world.

I had the pleasure of meeting Mr and Mrs Molotov of Russia and Mr and Mrs Madriaga of Spain, and was surprised to find that both of them had English wives, one of whom had studied with Mrs Sarojini Naidu in England. Mrs Brij Lal Nehru and I addressed occasional meetings, and answered questions about the conditions prevailing in India. I was present in the committee meeting when Finland impeached Great Britain and asked for reparations for the two ships sunk by them during the War. Brilliant lawyers from both sides pleaded the case and it was heartening to find that a world forum existed where such things could be tackled and settled amicably. Just before we left Geneva, the League secretariat arranged a dinner party for the Collaborators and we were asked to criticize the work of the League of Nations wherever we had felt that it was defective and needed improvement, without saying anything about the work that we approved of and appreciated. I criticized the work

on three points, the most important of which was regarding the Committee of Three. I told them that I had attended the session of the League full of hope that the study of their work would help us to find a solution to the most intricate minority problems before the Round Table Conference, but I had been disappointed to find that justice was not possible under the prevailing conditions of this Committee's work. All the applications received by the League of Nations' office about the difficulties of any section of the people in any country were sent to the Committee of Three. The interested big powers generally had their representatives on this Committee, and they had been given the power to forward only those applications which, in their opinion, required consideration, and reject the others. A committee of this type should never have been given such discretionary powers, to place what they liked on the agenda and throw the rest into the waste-paper basket. The Japanese representatives supported me. Throughout my study of the work of the League, I found that the Treaty of Versailles was a great handicap to a world assembly working for peace. Over and over again, I used to feel that, on the one hand, the clauses of the Treaty of Versailles should be relaxed and discarded and Germany slowly given back its freedom; and on the other, aggression, wherever it took place, should be put down with a strong hand. Only a policy of this type could avert another World War. In a representative international gathering in London, when Lord Lothian expressed similar ideas, I was happy that my sentiments had been voiced from a responsible platform.

As soon as the Second Round Table Conference met in London in September 1931, Mr Gandhi was elected unanimously to act as a mediator to bring about a settlement of the controversial questions between the different communities. Mrs Sarojini Naidu and I informed the Conference about the decision of the women's organizations (the All-India Women's Conference, the National Council of Women, the East Indian Association, and others) but Mrs Subbarayan differed from us.

Dr Maud Royden asked Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya and myself to speak on Hinduism and Islam in a church in the East

End of London. Just a week before, speeches had been delivered on Christianity in the same place. Punditji and I delivered our speeches and the audience was told to ask questions. I was depressed to find that, whereas Pundit Malaviya was asked innumerable questions about Hinduism, not a single person put any question to me about Islam. In fact, from the questions, I gathered that many of the persons present knew a great deal about Hinduism and *Gita*. A couple of weeks after this, one of the persons in charge of the Woking Mosque invited us to speak at one of their meetings in another part of London. Both Father and I went there to speak and the audience asked us a number of enlightened questions about Islam. We were introduced to some persons who had newly entered the Islamic fold, and I was glad to find that there were some who were trying to lessen the ignorance of the people in London about Islam.

Mr Gandhi started his work of mediation. Negotiations began between the different communities and these went on for nearly two months. Mr Gandhi would meet the members of the Muslim delegation in the Aga Khan's rooms and talks would go on for three or four hours, often late into the night. Committees used to meet in the mornings, especially the Federal Structure Committee, and talks would be held in the evenings. Mrs Sarojini Naidu used to accompany Mr Gandhi occasionally throughout the talks, and I realized very soon that the Hindu nation was not working for the freedom of all, but for the rule of the majority under a democratic system of government, with serfdom for the others. Swaraj meant Hindu raj, and not the freedom of India as a whole.

The Indian National Congress had made the blunder of sending Mr Gandhi, who was not a constitutional lawyer, as the only representative. He was not even given an organized secretariat including persons well-versed in statecraft, and therefore did not cut a good figure in the Federal Structure Committee. Sometimes the Committee would be talking of earth and he of heaven. Once, when this happened during the discussion of an important issue, Mrs Sarojini Naidu said to the Nawab of Bhopal: 'Go and wring that old man's neck. What is

he talking about?' His speeches were word-perfect and impressive, but when specific proposals about the constitutional structure had to be discussed and formulated, it was not possible to use ambiguous phrases. I heard some prominent Hindu delegates openly saying in Indian delegation meetings that Mr Gandhi in prison in India had been a force, and of greater help than Mr Gandhi in London. I used to feel that it was not his fault, but that of the Congress for not giving him an able secretariat. A memorable scene that I witnessed was the meeting of King George V and Mr Gandhi in the Picture Gallery of Buckingham Palace: His majesty, fully robed, standing with Mr Gandhi in his *dhoti* (loin cloth). What a picture they made!

I made an impassioned appeal in the Minorities Committee for settlement, and about that speech of mine a correspondent of the *Times* wrote:

A LESSON IN ENGLISH

> As Secretary for nearly twenty years of the Association, one of whose chief aims is to maintain the standard of written and spoken English, may I draw the attention of your readers at this opportune time, when the busiest of them have a little leisure, to the speech of the Begum Shah Nawaz at the meeting of the Minorities Sub-Committee of the Indian Round Table Conference held on Tuesday morning, December 23rd. It would be, indeed, difficult to improve the final sentence as reported in the *Times* of December 24th. (*Mr A.V. Houghton, The English Association, 4, Buckingham Gate, S.W.I.*)

Negotiations continued from day to day and went on for over two months; protracted talks with Mr Gandhi, as he sat spinning, with Father and Jinnah and sometimes the Aga Khan discussing the points raised by him, and the hours would drag on. At last the negotiations were concluded, Muslim demands were brought down to the minimum, and on the last day even Mr Gandhi agreed that it was not possible for him to ask the Muslims for any further reduction, and that the safeguards asked for by them, and as settled with him, were just and reasonable. After this last talk, we all returned very happy at the prospect of a settlement

in sight. Even people all around came to know that there was a chance of success, and a wave of happiness spread over Conference circles and amongst the responsible Indians in London. We of the Muslim delegation waited anxiously for four days, little thinking that, after our having come down to the very minimum and having satisfied Mr Gandhi, there could be any question of a breakdown in the negotiations. A message was received after four days that Mr Gandhi would be meeting the delegation in the evening. We were so sure of success that Father ordered sweets and drinks and asked two or three of his close friends and some reporters to come to the flat for celebrations, and we left for the meeting. With what joy and happiness we went to the Aga Khan's rooms on that memorable evening! Mr Gandhi arrived, and as usual sat down with the Aga Khan on one side and Father and Jinnah on the other. Gandhi said: 'Gentlemen, I am sorry to report that I have failed in my efforts for settlement. The Sikhs and the Mahasabhites are not prepared to accept the terms decided upon by us.' There was a hush in the room; the unexpected had happened and most of us felt like shedding bitter tears. Nearly a whole year's work for settlement had been wasted and even the Congress representative, and no less a person than Mr Gandhi himself, had failed to bring about a settlement. There did not seem to be any hope left for the country. Father was very cut up, for he had pinned all his hopes on the success of these efforts. Wherever he had spoken in England during the First Round Table Conference, he had told the audiences that had the Congress representatives been there, a settlement would have been arrived at between the different sections. Father suddenly folded his hands before Mr Gandhi and said:

> Gandhiji, you are the sole representative of the Congress here. If the Mahasabhites and the Sikhs are not prepared to accept the terms settled between us, which you yourself said were just and reasonable, let us, the Muslims and the Congress, come to a settlement tonight on those very terms. Believe me, there would be a wave of happiness all over India, and the Aga Khan, Jinnah and

> myself will take our marching orders from you from tomorrow. We Muslim do not fold our hands before anyone except before Allah, but I know that the Almighty will understand and forgive me, because I am doing it in order to avoid bloodshed and terrible suffering in India.

Mr Gandhi replied: 'Shafi, I know my own limitations and I cannot do it.' The meeting broke up, and when we reached our flat, Father broke down completely and fainted. The next morning, he told Mother to pack, as there was nothing left in the Conference after the breakdown of the negotiations, and we decided to leave London immediately. At that time I could not understand what those limitations of Mr Gandhi were, but I did when he was murdered.

An outstanding Labour member of Parliament, speaking to the members of the Indian delegation, once said about the Hindu-Muslim settlement that an almost similar situation had existed in Egypt. He told us that Nahas Pasha called the Copts when they were keeping aloof from the fight for freedom and asked them what would satisfy them in order to make them work wholeheartedly for the liberty of the country. He signed a blank paper and gave it to the Copts, and when ultimately the government was formed, although the Copts had asked for one minister, he gave them two, and in the advisory committee appointed to help the ministry the majority of the members were Copts. Nahas Pasha, by working in this manner, won the confidence of the minorities in Egypt and gave them the impetus to fight for the freedom of their motherland side by side with the majority community. Muslims were asking for majority rule in the provinces of the Punjab and Bengal only, which was their due, and were prepared to accept even bare majorities. The Hindus should have said 'by all means, have it' and by so doing they would have won the confidence of the Muslims. Statesmanship meant winning the confidence of each and all by generosity and by the acceptance of their legitimate claims.

Working with Mr Jinnah in the Round Table Conference and in the Muslim delegation meetings, I came to know the real

Mr Jinnah, who stood for Muslim solidarity, Muslim unity, and Muslim strength. When I first went to England, full of fervour for my country's independence, my speeches were the reflection of my thoughts of nationalism, patriotism, and hope. One day, when I was talking animatedly about India's freedom and pressing a certain point, Mr Jinnah smiled and said: 'You are still young, but you will get to know what I have learnt after working nearly thirty years with the Hindus.' Maulana Muhammad Ali called me to his bedside four days before his demise. He said, graciously, that he looked upon me as one of the future hopes of the nation and that he had to try and guide me to the right path. Then he related to me some of his sad experiences of working with the Hindus. Although he was very sick, he talked to me for nearly two hours. He advised me to be very careful of what I said on platforms about the future of the Muslim nation in India, and gave me his blessing. I learnt, and learnt it very soon, for my nationalism oozed out drop by drop when protracted negotiations were going on between the different communities, more especially later, during the two memorable months of talks with Mr Gandhi, who had been unanimously elected as Arbitrator by the Conference. The Congress leaders may have been very clever, but they were no match for our astute and vigilant leadership. Disappointed and disillusioned, I came to know that the Hindus wanted Hindu raj and not Indian independence, and my leaders had been perfectly right in giving me such good advice. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said that he could not understand the mentality of his community, who were prepared to forego the whole rupee rather than give four *annas* out of it to the Muslims. If only the leaders of the majority nation had been wise, realizing that the Muslims had accepted a Federation that would have an unalterable majority of Hindus in the Centre, and that they could easily have won the Muslims by offering to give them their due share everywhere; but they would not come to any reasonable settlement with the largest minority in India. When the negotiations broke down, there was nothing left in the Conference.

There being no settlement between the two major nations in the subcontinent, the important question looming large on the horizon was, should Muslims accept the Federation with an unalterable Hindu majority in the Centre? There were some members who felt that the Muslims should not do so, and that it was a good way out of the difficulty for the British to say 'no' to India's becoming a fully-fledged Dominion. Mother received a message through a so-called 'loyal Muslim' to ask Father, who was the spokesman of the Muslim delegation, not to accept responsible government in the Centre, saying that was what the Viceroy and the Secretary of State wanted. Mother very quietly delivered the message to Father, who became red in the face and replied: 'I have come here to serve the nation and the country, and not to sell them.'

We said goodbye to every one the day before we were to leave London, but after this message, Father felt that he should attend the Conference that morning and we both went to St. James's Palace. Father made his last speech and in it he made it clear that nothing short of full responsible government, with the status of a Dominion, would satisfy the people of India, including the Muslims. All that was required was to incorporate in the new Constitution the safeguards required to protect the rights and interests of the minorities. The Indian National Congress circles were jubilant, having been apprehensive that, after the breakdown of the negotiations, the Muslim delegation would not be prepared to back up the demand for a full responsible government in the Centre. As soon as Father finished his speech we left for Victoria Station, where a large number of friends had come to say goodbye. Special representatives of the Secretary of State and of Mr Gandhi had sent a message that Father had proved himself to be a true patriot by that morning's speech. One of our friends from the Secretary of State's office smilingly said: 'Sir Muhammad, we now meet either in the Frontier or the Sindh Government House.'

When we reached Marseilles, a letter was delivered to Father from the Viceroy, asking him to oblige the Government by joining the Executive Council in place of Sir Fazl-i-Hussain,

who was leading a delegation to South Africa and had to be away from India for a couple of months. Lord Willingdon had said that Father's services were required at that critical juncture in the history of the subcontinent, and he hoped that he would not refuse. Throughout the work of the Round Table Conference, Father and Fazl-i-Hussain had worked in collaboration with each other. Just before leaving for South Africa, Fazl-i-Hussain came to see Father and for the first time introduced Lady Fazl-i-Hussain, who was still in *purdah*, to him. Father and Fazl-i-Hussain embraced each other when they said goodbye. When Father told Mother about it, she was furious. The clerks in Lahore had written to say that they had already accepted retainers for four or five big cases, and joining the Executive Council would mean foregoing lacs of rupees. For over a year and a half, spent either at the Round Table Conference or in organizing things for the further work of the Conference, Father had not been able to do any professional work, had used most of his savings, and had an overdrawn account. Expenses abroad, especially in contacting and convincing responsible persons and securing their support for the Muslim cause, had been very heavy. Mother was naturally anxious that the cases should be retained, so that their financial worries might soon be over. When she objected to Father's acceptance of the invitation, he reminded her that all his life he had placed the service of his nation and of the country above family and money considerations, and he would not give that up as long as he lived. Mother warned him that he had to think of finances at that age. He smilingly replied that, after all, his becoming an official was only for a few months, and afterwards he would be able to hand over to her a couple of lacs in a month or two. He also said that his refusal, when things were so perturbed in India that one wrong step could be fatal, would be letting the country down. The Khilafat, the Ahrar, and Civil Disobedience movements were in full swing and thousands of people were in jails; such a situation required his services in government circles.

During the deliberations of the Second Round Table Conference, I had received a cable from my husband saying

that the Punjab Government wanted to nominate me a member of the Lahore Municipal Committee, later known as the Lahore Corporation, and advised me against accepting it. When Father saw the cable he smiled and said: 'Shah Nawaz, while wanting you to work in the political sphere, is asking you to forego the best chance which has been placed before you to get to know your future electorate,' and he advised me to accept it. On my return from London, the Mayor of Lahore, Mian Abdul Aziz, came to see us with a number of other Municipal Commissioners and asked me to stand for election for the newly-created Executive Officer's post in the municipality. The Government had decided that an Executive Officer with a good salary and wide powers be elected by the Committee to take charge of the administrative side. Muslim members were of the opinion that I stood the best chance of being elected, as all the members, irrespective of caste or creed, would vote for me. Father said that he would think over it and let them know the very next day. He advised me to refuse, as he did not consider it a proper assignment for me.

I took up my duties as a Municipal Commissioner actively and seriously, trying to make my colleagues take a personal interest in improving matters all around and making every effort to reorganize the work in the women's sphere. Mrs Nanak Chand Pundit and I were the only two women on the Committee and we worked together. The girls' schools and the one and only health centre were in deplorable conditions. Within the sum of money that was being spent on the Infant Welfare Health Centre, which was being run more on the lines of a regular hospital, with health visitors charging fees, we had four health centres set up, and this number was later increased to nine. In the Municipal Gardens round the city of Lahore, three *purdah* enclosures were arranged for women, and games for children were set up in them. For five years I continued this active work going to all corners of the town and getting to know people in Lahore and all around it. Sometimes early in the morning, I used to visit the ward of a colleague of mine while he was still sleeping, and after seeing the filth and refuse all around, used to call him out

of his house to point it out to him. The male Municipal Commissioners did not know anything about the health centres and other amenities for women and children, but I was delighted to find that they were ready to cooperate wholeheartedly when we placed any useful suggestion before them. While working in different areas of one community or the other, I had the opportunity of clearing away the day-to-day problems of the common man, and this knowledge helped my later work in the political sphere. I think that one of the reasons why the Hindu Mahasabha papers supported my representation at the Third Round Table Conference as the only woman member from India was due to this work of mine. Mrs Nanak Chand Pundit, who belonged to the Mahasabha section, had, by working with me, come to know my ideas of carrying on work for the good of all, irrespective of caste, colour, or creed. In a meeting of the Local Self-Government Conference which I had to address, I pointed out that I was sad to find that whatever had been accomplished for women and children during our membership of the Lahore Municipal Committee had not been added to by the ten women members who followed us. I requested them to take a personal interest in the welfare of the women and children of the city.

Father left for New Delhi soon after our arrival in Lahore, and within three weeks he succeeded in coming to grips with the worsening political situation. He returned to Lahore during Christmas week, 1931, and received a letter from the Viceroy thanking him in profuse terms, saying that he was lucky to have a statesman of Father's calibre in his Cabinet at that difficult time, a letter which was received when Father was breathing his last. He had come from Delhi in order to tackle the Ahrar and the Khilafat agitations, bringing Khwaja Hassan Nizami with him, and within a few days the position had already changed when he suddenly caught a chill, contracted pneumonia, and died on 7 January 1932, at the age of sixty-two years. When, within three days of his falling ill, Father's condition deteriorated, his personal friend and physician Colonel Sodhi asked Mother why she had let him work so hard; his strength had been completely sapped and he had no stamina left to fight

even an ordinary illness. The doctors gave up hope on the fifth day and within seven days he was gone. The grief all around at this void was overwhelming, and people openly said that they had been orphaned. Not only Muslims, but people from every community felt the loss as their very own, for he had been a friend to each and all.

Throughout the Second Round Table Conference, Father had to work very hard most of the time, and being the spokesman of the Muslim delegation was not any easy matter, to be able to answer difficult questions off the cuff and meet the intricate points that were arising form day to day in the meetings of the different committees, or in the Conference itself. Mr Jinnah was not taking much interest in the idea of a Federation for India, so most of the burden of speaking on behalf of the Muslim delegation fell on Father's shoulders. He started suffering from sleeplessness, and the slight cough which he had occasionally had after the first attack of pneumonia worsened. One day in November 1931, in London, he had a slight temperature. The Aga Khan rang up early in the morning and when I told him of Father's indisposition, he said to me: 'Child, take care of him; he is indispensable, and precious for his nation.' During the two Conferences, Father rose to heights which were applauded by some of the best brains of both countries. Being among the first rank in constitutional law, a subject which had not only been his life work, but a hobby as well, he contributed a great deal towards the planning of a suitable constitution, and his speeches on record are a clear proof of it. All this had taxed his strength considerably, and over and above it came the utter disappointment and depression of the failure of negotiations between the two major nations. As the dark and dreary future inevitable for India loomed large on the political horizon, his spirits had gone down.

The Central Legislatures, Provincial Assembly, Bench and Bar all paid rich tribute to Father's services and the papers mourned his loss. We received about 500 messages of sympathy from various parts of India and Europe, including a tribute from

His Majesty. The *Times* gave the following obituary, summarizing his political career:

DEATH OF SIR MUHAMMAD SHAFI

Sir Muhammad Shafi, KCSI, CIE, sometimes Education and afterwards Law Member of the Government of India, who died at Lahore yesterday at the age of 62 was one of the most respected and clear-sighted of the leaders of the Indian Moslems. At the first and second sessions of the Round Table Conference in London and the private negotiations with various groups, he exercised a judicious, if sometimes excessively cautious, influence on the decisions of the Moslem delegates. On his retirement from the Executive Council in 1924, he was aptly described by Lord Reading as possessing shrewd intelligence, keen political insight, a deep sense of loyalty to the causes he espoused, a high idealism tempered by practical considerations, devotion to the interests of India, and an all-abiding belief in the higher destiny of India within the Empire.

He refused a High Court Judgeship in 1912 (Madras), and again in 1918 (Lahore), thus leaving himself free to make a great name in Indian politics...

THE MOSLEM LEAGUE

Muhammad Shafi was a member of the All-India Mohammadan deputation to Lord Minto at Simla in 1906, which marked a definite departure from the policy of communal aloofness from politics that had been widely adopted under the influence of the great Sir Syed Ahmad. He was the founder, and the General Secretary, of the Punjab branch of the All-India Moslem League, and President of the Governing Body of the Islamia College, Lahore, from 1907 to 1919. He was President of many All-India Moslem gatherings, such as the Urdu Conference of 1911, the Education Conference of 1916, and the Moslem League in 1913 and 1927. No one did more than he to conserve moderate opinion and uphold constructive effort when tides of passion swept over the community, as during the Khilafat agitation of the Ali brothers. Twice Mr Jinnah, the advocate of Hindu-Moslem union, disaffiliated him and his group from the Moslem League; but the ultimate result was the emergence of a

new body under Shafi's leadership which virtually swallowed up the old organisation. He would never countenance a policy of mere negation and obstruction...

His great opportunity came when he was selected in July 1919, to succeed Sir Sankaran Nair, who had been the first Indian Education Minister of the Viceroy's Executive Council. He secured the passage of no fewer than five bills for the constitution of new universities, and took a large part in the provision of a university at the Imperial capital, Delhi. He was elected Pro-Chancellor and received from the new foundation the honorary degree of LL.D., while that of D.Litt. was conferred by the Aligarh Muslim University. In 1923, he became Law Member, in succession to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and through the greater part of his five and a half years in the Government of India he was the genial and resourceful Leader of the Upper House, the Council of State. A selection of his speeches and writings (for in earlier years he contributed many articles to the *Civil & Military Gazette* and other papers) entitled *Some Important Indian Problems* was marked by an ornate eloquence. His services at headquarters were of particular value during the long period of excitement among the Indian Moslems regarding the terms first imposed by the Allies upon Turkey after the War. In June 1916, he was made C.I.E., and in January 1922, K.C.S.I.

WORK AT ROUND TABLE

In the early autumn of 1930, Sir Muhammad came to London as a representative of India at the Imperial Conference. He was also a delegate to the first session of the Indian Round Table Conference which followed, and to the second session held in the autumn of 1931. Here he upheld with vigour and conviction the claims of the Moslems and other minorities to specific safeguards under a new Constitution, without any abatement of his strong support of India's aspiration for equal partnership within the British Commonwealth of Nations. A perusal of the Conference records shows that he made many valuable contributions to the constructive work of the Federal Structure Committee, and that he laboured for adjustment of communal claims to the ideal of Indian solidarity in the Minorities Committee. He left London before the conclusion of the

> second session, in response to urgent appeals from his aged mother, who was seriously ill, to her only son. A few weeks later it was announced that he was returning to the Viceroy's Executive Council to act for Mian Sir Fazl-i-Hussain during his brief deputation to South Africa for revision of the agreement regarding the rights of lawfully domiciled Indians.
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> A distinct element in Sir Muhammad's success and popularity was the contribution to his social life of Lady Shafi and their daughter, the Begum Shah Nawaz. Something of a sensation was caused in Simla when, on his appointment to the Viceroy's Executive in 1919, his wife abandoned the restrictions of a 'purdah-nashin' and became a resourceful and charming hostess. She is a lady of sympathetic outlook, and in the social life of Simla, Delhi, and Lahore she shared the popularity of her husband...The deep regret with which the death of Sir Muhammad Shafi has been received here is intensified by the sense of loss at the very time when his powers of statesmanship and influence over the members of his community would have been most useful. All Government offices were closed as a mark of respect to one who is remembered in Delhi as a keen lawyer, an able politician, and, above all, a very charming gentleman. (*The Times*, London, 8 January 1932)

Father died suddenly, but in spite of the heavy expenses and not having saved much, he left sufficient for my mother, for clearing the overdrawn accounts, and for the education and other expenses of my younger brother.

The love that he left behind him was something most precious for his children and even twenty years after his death, in spite of my own work, whenever I visited any street in Lahore I would always be called 'Shafi's daughter'. Throughout my tours all over India, wherever I went, Father's friends were my hosts and sponsors. From Burma to the Khyber Pass and from Cape Comorin to Kashmir, as 'Shafi's daughter' I could be sure a hearty welcome would be awaiting me. There were touching scenes during my first election to the Punjab Provincial Assembly. An old woman of ninety-two was brought on a *doli* to the polling booth when Mother was there. Her son said that his mother had insisted on casting her vote for 'Shafi's daughter' before she died. People who came to see us for weeks after his

death related incident after incident of what he had done for each one of them like a father, not only help in cash or kind, but the affection he used to shower on them. One young lawyer who came all the way from Mussoorie told me that the first time he was introduced to Father, he put his hand on the young man's shoulder and said: 'Son, I am happy to meet you.' He said that, having lost his own father in his infancy, no one had ever called him 'son' and he was thrilled when he heard Father do so. The last voyage from England on board the P. & O. *Ranchi* was unforgettable. Commander Brooks said to me that in his twenty-eight years' experience at sea, he had never come across a person who had become so popular with young and old alike in so short a time, and who had made such a success of the ship's functions as Father had done. Prince Ali, eldest son of the Aga Khan, who was travelling by the same boat, told me one day that he loved my father as much as his own, for he was so lovable. Lady Astor, in her letter of condolence to Mother, wrote that 'even in the West such personalities were rare and hard to find'. A batch of students from Aligarh College who saw me soon after Father's death gave me a touching account of how, sitting in that very office, they had come to ask him for a donation. They had expected as small a sum as they got from others when they used to go on house-to-house collections during their tours every year. When they went in, Father called for his cheque book, wrote a cheque and handed it to them, and they were surprised to find that it was for Rs. 500.

Most law cases of national and Muslim interest were conducted by him free of charge. One day, when he was sitting in his office studying an important brief, he heard someone crying and asking for him. The head clerk was saying, over and over again: 'Old man, you cannot pay Mian Shafi's fee. Go to some other lawyer and do not pester us.' Father immediately called the clerk and asked him to let him know who the person in distress was. He was informed that an old man, whose only son had been convicted of murder and had been awarded the death sentence, was insisting on seeing him. He asked the clerk to send him in, and when the man came he related the whole

case, placed a few stones before Father and, crying bitterly, said: 'This is all that I can pay you.' Father's fee in those days was two thousand rupees per day. He asked the man to hand over the papers to him, and after going through them Father told the old man to go home and sleep over it as, by the grace of God, he hoped to get his son released. He appeared in the case and won it. For a long time, innumerable tales were told about his kindheartedness and his loving temperament, but his friends alone knew what his loss meant to the people all around.

Mother and Father were ideally happy, their temperaments being so alike—sociable, sympathetic, generous, fond of company, hospitable, and prepared to spend their last penny on the poor and needy. When Kamla Devi Chattopadhya stayed two weeks in our home, she was surprised to find such a united, happy family. In her letter to me she wrote that 'for those whose lives were broken pitchers, to see a vase of such perfect workmanship of unity existing in the world was happiness unbounded.' We were blessed with a home where discord was unknown.

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THE LONELY FURROW

Father, my guide, philosopher, and friend, was gone. My husband was ill and it was becoming increasingly difficult for me to continue work. With innumerable problems facing me, I knew that I had to fight a lonely battle throughout the rest of my life. While writing in reply to Lady Fazl-i-Hussain's kind letter of sympathy I said that I would be giving up politics, as I had no heart left to do any more work in that sphere. Mian Fazl-i-Hussain read that letter and I received a long epistle from him saying: 'Your nation needs you, and you have to carry on your good work in politics.' He very kindly wrote that it was my duty to follow the path chalked out for me by my father, especially as my husband's health was declining rapidly, and I had to think of the future of my brother and of my little children. He advised me not to think of giving up political work and assured me that his advice would be available for me whenever required. Father's death had meant the shattering of our whole world, but at the same time I knew that it was up to me to keep the flag of the family flying. Had he not brought me up as he did for such an emergency? I was grateful to Mian Fazl-i-Hussain for drawing my attention to it and I knew that he had given me sound advice. I had to follow the same road, even if it had to be all by myself.

So far, we had lived very sheltered lives, without having to work for comfort or contacts. Father's demise had been sudden and a number of matters had to be straightened out, both for Mother and myself. After this sad loss, I would have to fight for myself and for those around me for everything.

Three and a half months after Father's death, the Lothian Franchise Committee of the Round Table Conference visited Lahore in April 1932, and I asked them to spend an evening with us. Mother and I had decided to live together in her house, *Iqbal Manzil*, and my husband had taken over Father's office as a lawyer. Unfortunately, his health deteriorated rapidly. He could not continue his practice, and within a year had to give up work completely.

I had been elected Vice-President of the All-India Women's Conference and I went to attend the meeting of the Standing Committee at Nagpur in July 1932. Sir Montague Butler was the Governor of the Central Provinces at that time and a number of Father's friends were also there, including Sir Maneckji and Lady Dadabhoy. As it was my first visit to Nagpur since Father's death, most of them came to see me. Lunching with Sir Montague, he and I talked of Father and of the old times for a long while.

During the deliberations of the Standing Committee, while talking to a prominent woman leader of the Indian National Congress, I came to know what they were aiming at. The majorities of one per cent given to the Muslims in the Punjab and Bengal under the Communal Award were not acceptable to them and they were trying to have the Muslim women's seats, reserved for them through separate electorates, thrown into the common pool by agitating for joint electorates for all the women's seats, and by so doing take away the bare majorities of one given to the Muslims in those legislatures. Miss Ferozuddin and I told the Standing Committee that Muslim women would never accept joint electorates when their men were not prepared to do so. Women members of the Nationalist group were ready to agitate along with the Hindu members for joint electorates for women. My father had practically given his life to secure majority rule in the Punjab and Bengal, and having been present during all the negotiations that had taken place in London, I knew the importance of this question. On my return to Simla, I saw Mian Fazl-i-Hussain, explained the whole matter to him and sought his help and advice. At the same time, I

decided to organize a Women's Muslim League in the Punjab, which I did immediately on my return from Nagpur.

Tazi had studied English poetry for a couple of months with Mr Dickinson, Professor of English in Government College, and she was writing poems in English. She decided to join the Lady Irwin College set up by the All-India Women's Conference for Home Economics in New Delhi. I had helped to organize it and was also a member of the governing body of the College. The governing body had asked me to interview Mrs Hannah Sen, a highly-qualified lady living in England, for the Principalship of the College, and according to my advice she was engaged. Tazi joined the College, and after three years of study she passed with honours in every subject. She later wrote a book on Home Science in Urdu which was published by Gulab Singh & Sons. She also wrote a set of textbooks for children which were accepted by the University at Delhi and others.

In November 1932, I was asked to go to London as the only woman member to attend the Third Round Table Conference. All the papers in India, including those of the Hindu Mahasabha, said that I represented the womanhood of India and not a single voice was raised by any women's organization or newspaper against my selection. I had been fighting for the rights of women belonging to every section and community all my life, and this had been my life's main work. Moreover, while Mrs Subbarayan differed from the recommendations of all the three prominent women's associations in India, the All-India Women's Conference, the National Council of Women, and the Women's East India Association, I had supported their demands. I was the Vice-President and a member of the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference. I had been elected General Secretary of the Punjab Muslim Women's League, and I was the only woman member of the All-India Muslim League Council. After a couple of weeks' work in the Conference in London, having placed and advocated the women's demands before the Conference and addressed a large number of meetings of different women's organizations, I caught influenza, which

was raging in London at the end of December, contracted pneumonia, and was seriously ill for a couple of weeks.

Just before my illness, I received an invitation from the Lord Mayor of London to a dinner party taking place the next evening in the Guild Hall, which I accepted. The next day, when I returned from a meeting of the Conference, I found a message asking me to respond to the toast which was to be proposed to the lady guests at the dinner. When I reached my destination, I was surprised to find that the function was a large dinner with 1500 guests and the Duke of Marlborough was presiding. When I sat down at the main table, I found that the guests sitting on both sides of me had written speeches in their hands, and on the printed programme placed in front of me my name was the fifth on the list of speakers. I spoke to the gathering and I felt people were very appreciative and when I shook hands with the Duke, he said that mine had been the speech of the evening. I was happy to learn that I had been given the honour to be the first woman to speak there in the 600 years' existence of the Guild Hall.

During my illness, friends of the family, Lord Sankey, Miss Ramsay MacDonald, and Mr Butler, came to the hotel personally. Lady Swathling, sister-in-law of Mr Montague, who had become a great friend of the family during the First and Second Round Table Conference, looked after me like a relation, sending cooked food as ordered by the doctors from her own house, and as soon as I was convalescent she asked me to spend a weekend with her. Such kindness can never be forgotten. Indians settled in London, especially Dr Katial and Dr Khan, looked after me like real brothers throughout my illness and Lady Swathling arranged for the King's physician to see me on the evening when I was most seriously ill. After spending seven weeks in bed with day and night nurses, I left for India at the end of January 1933.

Before I left London, the Marquis of Lothian talked to me and he advised that the women's organizations in India should cooperate during the deliberations of the Joint Select Committee and should not follow the Indian National Congress, otherwise

their case would go by default because of the strong propaganda against it by the orthodox section. He also said that a witness like Rajkumari Amritkaur, who would not budge an inch from what she was advocating, should appear on behalf of the women's organizations. She had advocated the cause strongly before the Lothian Franchise Committee.

Sir Muhammad Iqbal was one of the members of the Third Round Table Conference and Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan was the spokesman of the Muslim delegation. The Secretary of State asked His Highness and Begum Aga Khan, Sir Akbar and Lady Hydari, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, and myself to a lunch which Lady Maud Hoare's sister also attended.

Soon after my return from London in January 1933, I tried to contact the outstanding women leaders, especially Rajkumari Amritkaur, who was the Chairman of the Standing Committee. With the Indian National Congress non-cooperating, it was not an easy task to make the women's organizations agree to cooperate, Although I still had a temperature every day and I could not get rid of the cough, I worked hard to win their support. Rajkumari Amritkaur had been operated upon and was in hospital, and I went to see her there. After explaining the position fully, I told her the gist of Lord Lothian's talk and asked her to persuade the others not to take up a policy of non-cooperation. Rajkumari Amritkaur understood the case, agreed with me and promised to give all possible help in the mater. I wrote letters to Dr Reddy in Madras and to other friends in different provinces. Within a couple of weeks, it was decided that all three organizations, the All-India Women's Conference, the National Council of Women, and the Women's East India Association, should elect ten delegates each and the thirty of them should meet in Bombay to formulate a memorandum which should be presented to the Joint Select Committee on behalf of the women of India. Thirty of us met in Bombay and a memorandum was drafted.

I was nominated for the Indian delegation to the Joint Select Committee in 1933 as the only woman member. As I could not get rid of the temperature, Mother and my brother did their best

to persuade me to refuse the invitation, but I accepted and with a temperature of 102° left for London at the end of April 1933. The voyage from Bombay to Marseilles helped me to get rid of all my ailments and before reaching London, I regained my health completely.

It had been decided by the organizations that only Rajkumari Amritkaur should appear as a witness on behalf of the women of India before the Joint Select Committee. After my leaving the shores of India, they planned to send two more, Dr Reddy and Begum Hamid Ali. I knew that this had been done in order to press the point that women's seats should be filled through joint electorates. Miss Mary Pickford, MP, an able lady, was the only woman member of the British delegation to the Joint Select Committee and she was of great help to me in getting the women's question through.

I had to work very hard to secure the support of all the women members of Parliament and other prominent ladies at different stages of negotiation. I knew that, being the only woman member, a tremendous responsibility to safeguard the rights and interests of the womanhood of India had been placed on my shoulders. All the women members of Parliament and foremost women leaders of Great Britain supported the Indian women's demands wholeheartedly, including the members of the Conservative Party. The help of Lady Astor, the Duchess of Athol, Lady Pethick Lawrence, Lady Reading, Miss Rathbone, Mrs Corbett Ashby, Dame Edith Lyttleton, Lady Hartog, and many other outstanding women workers at every step was most valuable.

The three women witnesses who appeared before the Joint Select Committee pressed for joint electorates for women's seats and Begum Hamid Ali, a Muslim lady from Bombay, was made to emphasize the point. I questioned her at length to show that the overwhelming majority of Muslim women did not agree with her, in order to make it clear to the members of the Select Committee that, if Muslim men did not accept joint electorates, it could not be possible for Muslim women to agree to them.

During the deliberations of the Joint Select Committee in June 1933, I learnt at one of the Secretary of Sate's dinner parties that Mr Jinnah was thinking of buying a house and settling in London. I was much perturbed and could not sleep the whole night. Early next morning, I rang up Miss Fatima Jinnah and she asked me to have lunch with them. After the meeting of the Select Committee I went to their house, which was about eight miles from London. Mr Jinnah was sitting working in the lounge. I went in and stood before him, and asked if it was true that he was planing to settle in London. He replied that there was some truth in it. I told him that he could not do it; Father was gone and there was no one but him to pilot the nation and he had to return to his country. He asked if I really thought so and I replied, not only did I think so but I had come to take him back home. The nation and the country needed him. He said: 'What about Lord Willingdon?' I replied that Willingdon would not be there for very long. Throughout the meal, we went on talking about and planning the reorganization of the Muslim League to put new life into it. Pondering over my talks with Mr Jinnah, I often thought how much one learnt from such a towering personality in so short a time.

We addressed a number of meetings on different platforms, especially of women's organizations, where Rajkumari Amritkaur, the other woman witnesses, and I had to deal with the women's questions and I had to justify the demand of the Muslim women to have separate electorates. During my stay in London, British friends of my family were extremely kind and I had the pleasure of staying with some of them in their country houses and was entertained by others; I enjoyed unforgettable hospitality in their homes. I spent a weekend with Mr Rab Butler and his wife and had the pleasure of meeting their three sons.

During one of my talks with the Marquis of Lothian, I asked him why, if they could find a way out of the most intricate problems of the minorities by giving a Communal Award, they could not coin special qualifications for women which would give them an effective electorate under the new constitution for

India? He replied that they meant to do their best to safeguard the rights and interests of women.

Mr Yusuf Ali appeared as a witness on behalf of the Muslims before the Joint Select Committee, and during the examination he strongly objected to the giving of any special qualification to women voters. His plea was that as Islam recognized equality in civic rights for both men and women, the Muslims in India would be prepared to give franchise to women on the same basis as men, and would not agree to any special privileges. Lord Lothian, Miss Mary Pickford, and I questioned him at length about the conditions prevailing in India. I pointed out to him that Muslim women in the entailed families, especially in the Punjab, did not enjoy property rights according to the Islamic Law of Shariat, and asked if franchise was to be based on property qualifications only, what the percentage of women who could enjoy franchise under such conditions would be.

I left London on 17 August 1933, after the conclusion of the main work of the Joint Select Committee. A couple of months after my return, I was again asked to go to England for the finalization of the work of the Joint Select Committee, but I refused the invitation, as I felt that the important work had been finished and there was no special need for me to go again.

In 1935, the Constitution was published and women were given an electorate of 6,600,000 women voters. The franchise for all was based on a property qualification, lower than that which had been given under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms Scheme, and an additional qualification had been added; in the case of women, bare literacy was to be the qualification, as against primary or other certificates for men. As these two qualifications gave women only an electorate of 2,300,000, a special qualification was coined to enlarge the women's electorate: the wives of all those men who were already voters of the Principal and Central Assemblies were given the right to vote. This gave the women in India an electorate of 4,300,000 and thus altogether the women's electorate became 6,600,000, i.e. one-sixth of the subcontinent's electorate. Moreover, seats were reserved for them in all the legislatures. Adult suffrage

had not been considered feasible for India for the time being and only 14 per cent of the population, which was equivalent to 27 per cent of the adults, had been enfranchised, as against an electorate of 1.8 per cent that the people had been enjoying under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. When, in 1936 and 1937, elections were held all over the country, eighty women members were elected to the Provincial and Central Parliaments. One woman Minister, two Parliamentary Secretaries, one Deputy Speaker, and a Deputy President of an Upper House were appointed. Some women won seats through joint electorates with men and India became third in the world in the number of its women legislators, the USSR and the United States being the other two. The Muslim women's seats were to be filled by separate electorates, and in the Punjab and Bengal they were to be elected by women voters only. It had been an uphill task to secure an effective number of women voters, when even the Muslim witnesses before the Joint Select Committee had opposed a special qualification for women. Over and over again, I was faced with the problem of what to do when adult suffrage was not possible. Even Mr Gandhi had said in the Franchise Committee of the Round Table Conference that some type of indirect system of elections would have to be devised for the illiterate millions of India, and most of the members had agreed that undiluted adult suffrage would not be advisable for the country at that stage. Under the circumstances, the best brains of Britain and India combined had to devise some means to give women an effective voting strength, so that they should not remain a negligible factor in Indian political life.

According to my promise to Mr Jinnah in London, I had a talk with Khalifa Shujauddin, Secretary of the Punjab Muslim League, and asked him to take active steps to reorganize the Provincial Branch. Mr Jinnah returned to India, and Mr Habib, editor of *Siasat*, and I attended the meeting of the Muslim League Council convened by him. I had a long talk with him and during the conversation he said: 'Now that I am working on your father's plank, what about your cooperation in the reorganization work?' I replied that he had not only my own

wholehearted cooperation, but I hoped to get the majority of my tribesmen and relations into line with him.

The different political parties in the Punjab began strengthening themselves and I continued my work in the women's sphere, taking part in some of the mixed gatherings convened to work for the coming reforms. I had been the President of the All-India Women's Conference, Provincial Branch, for a number of years, but I had handed over the office to other ladies when I had become too busy with the work of the Round Table Conference.

Mian Haq Nawaz had been elected President of the Tribal Conference and I had been elected Vice-President. I convened a meeting of the tribal heads and explained to them about the new reforms, drawing their attention to the important features of the Constitution and asked them to unite so that the third largest tribe in the province should take its due place.

As President of the Orphanage Committee of the *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam*, I had gone to attend the weddings of a number of girls which were taking place on 31 December 1933. After the brides had left at about 12 p.m., I came home to find the Secretary of State's telegram congratulating me on the award of a *Kaisar-i-Hind* gold medal. I was very upset and did not know what to do, as all my life I had disliked rewards and titles for my services. Soon after that, when I visited New Delhi and went to lunch at the Viceroy's House, I asked Sir Eric Meville, Secretary to the Viceroy, whose bright idea it had been to give this award to me. He replied immediately that it had been entirely their Excellencies' own idea. I quietly said that it was very kind of them, but I wished that he had enquired from me beforehand, as all my life I had been against titles and awards. When it was given to me, I was in a fix and did not know what to do; stick to my principle, or accept it? Being a cooperator, I could not refuse.

Early in 1935, I had gone to Delhi for a meeting and when I was lunching with Lord Willingdon, he said to me that he was asking me to travel to Geneva as the only delegate from India to the Women and Children's Committee of the League of Nations

and as a member of the delegation to the International Labour Conference. I replied that, my husband being sick, it was not possible for me to leave the country. He said that my two grown-up daughters were there to take care of their father and he was giving me 'marching orders' to go. I had to get ready within a few weeks and leave for Geneva early in April 1935.

The work of the Women and Children's Committee was very important, and some of the items on the agenda, like the traffic in women and the questions of delinquent minors, reformatory institutions, and destitute homes, were informative and throughout the work of that Committee I learnt a great deal. There was seventeen days' interval between the work of this Committee and the meeting of the International Labour Conference. In London there were remnants of the Jubilee celebrations and an Italian art exhibition was being held in Paris; I was longing to visit both places, and meet a number of friends in England. A basketful of blue books, with a long agenda, arrived from the International Labour Office, and the subjects being new to me, I thought of my father's good advice. He had said: 'Child, know your brief, and then you will have nothing to be afraid of,' and I decided to act upon it and keep it as my principle in life always. I asked my secretary to reserve accommodation for me in a good hotel at Interlaken and after finishing my report on the work of the Women's Committee and despatching it to the Secretary of State, I left for there in April.

There was snow on the trees when I arrived. Seven Germans were staying at the Beau Rivage Hotel, where I was staying, and none of them knew English. On my seventh day there I felt lonely, as there was no one to talk to, so I went and bought a tin of cigarettes to keep me company, but they gave me a bad throat and that was the last I saw of them. Two or three days later a German family arrived with a young girl of seventeen who knew English. We started talking, became friends and did some sightseeing together. I went to see the Yungfrau and walked on the snows. At Interlaken, I heard the news of a terrible earthquake in Quetta and of the death of some good

friends living there. The sixteen days that I spent there gave me ample time to go through the agenda and read all the blue books. I was very happy when Mr Dibdin, the secretary attached to our delegation by the India Office, said that what I did not know of the agenda would not be worth knowing. A Miss Wall, a charming lady who was a member of the British Home Civil Service, had also been attached to the secretariat. I was appointed a reporter of the Women's and Minors' Committee. While I was presenting the Report of the Committee to the Conference, the labour delegate of the British delegation challenged an item and I gave him an off-the-cuff reply. The head of the British delegation, Mr Laggert, was away and on the conclusion of that day's proceedings he came over and said to me that he was very sorry for not having been present in the meeting when I 'squashed Mr A.B. Edwards'.

The International Labour Conference was one of the most interesting conferences that I had ever attended. The tri-party system of the conference made it unique and very informative. The delegation from each country was composed of representatives of the government, the employer and the labour, and as soon as the delegations arrived they got in touch with similar delegations from other countries, so that ultimately three world sections emerged out of this, the governments, the employers, and the labourers. One learnt a great deal during three or four weeks in a conference of this type. It was interesting to find that the International Labour Office was supplying a considerable amount of information to the labour delegates from every country and helping them in every way.

Lord Willingdon had given me a letter for a British lady named Madame Barton, who had settled in Geneva and was known as the 'Queen of Geneva'. A charming personality with great ability, she lived in a beautiful house on the shores of the lake. Many world personalities gathered there socially and had talks in her house. She asked me to dine with her one evening when a number of well-known persons from different countries, including a prince, were present and she made me the chief lady guest. Later, she told me that I had been under observation all

the time that evening and they were surprised to find that 'all of it came so easy to me'.

While in Geneva, I realized that whereas Munchukaks had been the vexing question before the League of Nations in 1931, in 1935 the Abyssinian aggression was looming large on the horizon of world politics. The officials of the League of Nations, and many others who were attending meetings connected with the world organization, were feeling very strongly that unless the clauses of the Treaty of Versailles were scrapped and aggressions put down strongly, the League would not be able to survive, and for all this an International Force was badly needed.

Did human beings realize that space and distance were being gradually wiped out every day by marvellous scientific developments, and that one incident in any corner of the world could have dangerous repercussions all over the globe within a few hours? Unfortunately not, because developments in the sphere of science were far ahead of the advancements in spiritual and mental spheres. When the countries of the world were coming nearer to each other every day and the globe was being knit together, a 'United States' of the whole world was required to plan and distribute the fruits of human labour—manual, physical and mental. A brotherhood of mankind—could it ever be brought into existence when prophets had failed to achieve it? In the outlook of mankind a complete change was required with regard to its personal life, ideals, and aspirations; perfect freedom in belief and behaviour but with it co-existence as free citizens of a country or of a nation, and at the same time of the whole world. To save the present-day world from another catastrophe, it had become imperative to aspire to achieve this.

On my return from Geneva, I addressed a meeting in Calcutta about the work of the League of Nations and I emphasized the fact that this world organization was handicapped because of its having been based on the Treaty of Versailles, where the basic concept had been the conquerors and the conquered. Could any organization built on such a concept succeed? I traced the successful working of the League in most spheres, including international labour, but so far it had failed in the most important

of all, i.e. the political sphere for which it had been created, all because of the Treaty of Versailles.

On the last day, when I went to fetch my ticket from the office of the Lloyd-Triestino Company, I had a strange premonition that during the journey my life would be in danger, and I felt perturbed. On my return to the hotel, I wrote to Mother, who was staying in Calcutta with my younger brother, asking her to pray for me. After arriving in India, I collected a few things from my home in Lahore and proceeded to Abbottabad to join my family, who were spending the summer there. I was travelling alone in a ladies' compartment on the evening train from Lahore to Rawalpindi when, during the night, at about 3 a.m., nearly two stations away from Rawalpindi, someone entered my compartment in the running train. I woke up suddenly and saw a man leaning across my feet and throwing something out of the window. Getting up quickly, with all the strength at my command I pulled the chain of the danger signal, which fortunately was quite close to me. The chain rattled, and as soon as the man heard the noise he withdrew his head from the window and came towards me. Meanwhile, the train was slowing down; he changed his mind and jumped out of the window. The train stopped and when a guard came to my compartment he was trembling like a leaf. He said I should thank my stars, that it was at that very spot that a European lady had been cut into pieces the year before. He told me that after that a police van had been attached to the women's compartment until only a month before. So far, saving my own life was all that I had thought of, but then I looked around and found that my attaché case and my suit-case were gone. When I told the guard about it, he asked whether, if they were to take the train back, I would be able to spot the place where the man had jumped out. A voice within me made me say 'yes'. He whistled, the train went back, and within fifteen minutes I saw a stream sparkling in the moonlight and I told him that this was the place. The train was stopped and a number of persons rushed out of different compartments. My large suit-case was lying about ten yards away, but the attaché case could not be found.

I was happy, as all my jewellery and cash were in the suitcase. A few weeks later, the police found the attaché case as well, but some silver articles were missing from it. About six months later, the dacoit was caught while robbing a bride and he told the police that he had had a loaded pistol with him when he entered my compartment. He also said that, had he known who I was, he would not have entered it.

The Constitution of 1935 had, with a wider franchise, abolished the system of diarchical government in the provinces and had given full provincial autonomy to the people, with larger houses of parliament and a pattern of government exactly like the British. The leader of the largest party in the House was to be the Chief Minister, and the Cabinet was to be chosen by him with the approval of the Governor or the Governor-General. Only Part I of the 1935 Constitution was to be enforced and elections were to be held at the end of 1936 and beginning of 1937.

Mian Fazl-i-Hussain was still a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. He came to Lahore to reorganize the Punjab Unionist Party, which was composed of members from all communities. He asked me to tea and told me that as his term of office in the Council would be expiring soon, he would be returning to the Punjab to take up in earnest the work of the reorganization of the Party. He was appointing five Secretaries to organize the five divisions of the Punjab, and said that he would like me to join the Unionist Party as one of them. He asked me about the aim of my work in the legislatures. I replied that we women had realized very early in our work of general advancement that, unless women entered the sphere of legislative work, it would not be possible for them to achieve economic independence and emancipation. Women, so far, had remained a neglected factor and even a Director of Education had said that 'women's education was being considered a waste-paper basket, and whatever was over from the boys' education would be thrown into it'. Special maternity hospitals, with more beds and trained midwives; welfare centres; industrial institutions; cottage industries, with marketing facilities and special syllabi

for instruction were all required for them. For Muslim women, legislation to achieve the rights given to them under the Muslim Personal Law of Shariat had to be enacted, and for women of other communities new laws had to be framed to safeguard their rights and interests as wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters. He said that in order to achieve success in my mission I needed to work with a majority in the House, and should therefore join the Unionist Party, which would be sweeping the polls in the coming elections. I replied that I would think it over and then let him know. We discussed a number of other questions and he said that out of the young men in the Punjab he had previously selected two persons, Sikandar Hayat and Firoz Khan Noon, and that Sikandar Hayat had worked hard to justify the trust placed in him and had grown into a statesman. He asked me to persuade Mian Bashir Ahmad and my cousin, Iftikharuddin, to join the Unionist Party. He said that he needed scholarly persons like Bashir, who studied a great deal and on whose facts and figures one could rely. Moreover, he wanted persons like them, who were financially independent and would not be asking him for offices immediately, to train for future work. I talked to Bashir and Iftikhar, but both refused to join. On my return home, I consulted my husband and he advised me to accept the secretaryship of the Unionist Party. He said that, although he himself had never been a member of that Party, he knew that it would be successful in the coming elections and, as I wanted to work for the general advancement of women, I should join it. I told him that I was worried and could not decide; being a born Muslim Leaguer, I could not be anything else but that, and there was danger of a clash between the Muslim League and the Unionist Party during the elections. He said that I need not worry about it because the Muslim members of this Party would be Muslim Leaguers as well. Sikandar Hayat was the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India at that time, and I decided to travel to Calcutta to see him and make sure that he would be returning to the Punjab. Sir Fazl-i-Hussain was ailing and I wanted to be certain that Sikandar would be joining Punjab politics. My brother Iqbal was stationed in Calcutta and Mother

was there with him. Sikandar and I had a long talk and when I asked him a direct question about his return to Punjab politics, he said that I knew all about the heavy burdens of a large family that he had to carry on his shoulders. He had an easy and lucrative job, but he would not, of course, let the idea of money and comfort stand in the way of national interests, and he had decided to go back to the Province and handle politics again. I was happy to learn of his decision, and soon after my return to Lahore I joined the Unionist Party and accepted the secretaryship.

Fazl-i-Hussain returned to the Punjab and started a well-organized election campaign. A representative meeting of persons from all over the Province was held at his residence, and was attended by most of the prominent and influential citizens of every district of the Punjab. Over one lac rupees were collected there and then and handsome monthly contributions were promised. A spacious building for an office was secured and an efficient secretariat organized. We were placed in charge of divisions, and were made responsible for organizing work in order to win the seats of the Assembly in each district. With the Nawab of Mamdot as Chairman, Nawab Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana, Mir Maqbul Mahmud, Sardar Habib Ullah, Sheikh Faiz Muhammad, and I took over the work in the office as Secretaries.

There were whispers of a rapprochement with the Muslim League and we were working for it when Fazl-i-Hussain died suddenly in Dalhousie. This was a great blow to the Unionist Party and within a few weeks all the papers that had been with us, except the *Nawa-i-Waqt*, started talking a different language. People were no longer sure of the Party's success and its destiny was at its lowest ebb.

I received a telegram from Sikandar Hayat in August 1936, asking me to take full charge of the office and informing us that he would be reaching Lahore at the beginning of October. My family was in Dalhousie and my husband was indisposed, but I came down from the hills with Mother and for the first time in fifteen years spent the month of August in Lahore. Nawab Shah

Nawaz and I had to work day and night to place the Party on a sound footing before the arrival of Sikandar Hayat. On my return from Dalhousie, I was very much perturbed to find so much pessimism existing in our own circles—despondency among the bulk of the members and indifference towards the party in the press. After two months of hard labour the atmosphere was completely changed. Nawab Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana, on his return from the hills, was surprised to see it and he wrote to Sikandar about it. I received a very kind letter from him appreciating the success that had been achieved in so short a time. Meanwhile, in spite of every possible attempt on our part, a serious clash between the Muslim League and the Unionist Party was becoming imminent. We were worried, as most of the Muslims in the Party belonged, like myself, to the Muslim League and none of us had ever dreamt of such an eventuality. When Sikandar returned to Lahore I requested him to let me talk to Mr Jinnah, who was coming to Lahore to organize the Muslim League work, and he welcomed the idea.

I asked Mian Abdul Aziz, barrister-at-law, to accompany me. We went to see Mr Jinnah and I explained the whole situation in the Punjab to him. I had taken some files from the Unionist Office with me and talked to him with facts and figures. I said that the Punjab Unionist Party was strongly entrenched and I could give him a picture of more or less all the five divisions of the Province. The Muslim League could not possibly win more than two seats at the utmost, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan's in Jhelum and the other by a cousin of mine in Lahore, Mian Abdul Majid, barrister. Mr Jinnah replied that his information was completely different and the Muslim League's position was strong. I said that those who had told him this were not well informed and I passed on to him Sikandar's suggestion that the Muslim members of the Unionist Party be known as Muslim League Unionists. I explained that it was not possible for a Muslim party to carry on a government successfully in the Province with a majority of only one vote, even if all Muslim members belonged to that party, which was very doubtful. The Unionist Party was composed of elements that were ready to

cooperate with the Muslim League and Sikandar Hayat assured Mr Jinnah of the whole-hearted support and loyalty of all the Muslim members of the Unionist Party, himself included, who were true Muslim Leaguers at heart. We discussed the question, but during our talk I was pained to find that he relied on the information that had been given to him which I knew was incorrect and utterly unfounded. The Muslim League in the Province had not done any organized work, and they had given Mr Jinnah inaccurate information about the situation in the various districts, probably because they themselves knew very little about it. I pointed out that most of the candidates who were likely to win at the polls had already given an assurance and had practically signed the Unionist pledge. Mr Jinnah would not accept Sikandar's suggestion, and this made us Muslim Leaguers very depressed. The clash came and my surmise proved correct. The League won only two seats, that of Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Malik Barkat Ali. Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan joined the Unionist Party soon after the election and was appointed a Parliamentary Secretary in the Sikandar régime. My cousin, Mian Abdul Majid, lost his seat to Nawab Qizilbash by a couple of hundred votes only.

I was asked to take charge of the Education, Medical and Public Health Departments as a Parliamentary Secretary. Sikandar Hayat had selected his Cabinet and Parliamentary Secretaries wisely out of the different sections and communities, and his set of Parliamentary Secretaries were good speakers who had been carefully appointed to form a second line, as the officials were no longer members of the Assembly.

Meanwhile, the Muslim League was gathering force everywhere. Mr Jinnah's personality and leadership, active work and constant touring, had infused a new spirit in the national organization, especially in the minority provinces, and Muslim members of the Unionist Party were feeling restive, but no one would dare broach the subject to the Leader. One day, before his arrival at a Muslim members' meeting, which Sikandar often called separately, the young members of the Party requested me to broach the topic in the meeting. They said it was high time

that we sincerely considered the question of a rapprochement with the Muslim League. A whole year had passed since the elections and even in the Punjab the League was gathering force, and there was an upsurge for united work for the nation. We were all keenly aware that we should take part in the battle that was being fought to secure and safeguard Muslim rights and interests. After the agenda had been disposed of and we were about to disperse I opened the subject, and while I was speaking I could see the Leader getting red in the face. After explaining the situation, I went on to say that everyone present at the meeting was of the same opinion as I, only they did not have the courage to say so. Each one of us, including he himself, I said, was a Muslim Leaguer at heart, and the sooner we were within the Muslim League fold the better it would be for all of us and for the Muslim nation, and we therefore requested him to approach Mr Jinnah again. I said that it was true that the Sikandar Ministry was strong and the Party had all the power in the Province in its hands, but it was our duty as Muslims to join the League and strengthen its ranks by working within it. There was complete silence after my speech; Sikandar Hayat said nothing, got up and closed the meeting. Mr Afzal Ali Hasnie, one of the Parliamentary Secretaries, said that only I could have the courage to touch this subject. Although Sikandar had not liked my frank talk, the result was that within a couple of weeks we all left for Lucknow, where the Muslim League session was being held. The Jinnah-Sikandar pact was signed and we became Muslim League Unionists within the Party, as I had proposed to Mr Jinnah before the elections.

I spoke in the open session of the Muslim League at Lucknow. So far, I had been the only woman member of the League Council, and I drew the attention of the members to this in the Council meeting. It was subsequently decided that the delegations from each province be asked to include two women members each.

The question of organizing the Muslim League work amongst the women in the provinces was discussed. I reminded the Council that a Punjab Provincial Women's League had been

working since 1932, and asked whether it should continue as it was. Mr Jinnah said that he had never believed in separate organizations for men and women and had always wanted both to work together, as they did in the Indian National Congress. I was delighted to learn this and agreed with it wholeheartedly. The Council decided that a Women's Central Committee, with representatives from each province, be nominated by the President, and the Provincial Presidents be asked to appoint similar Committees in all the provinces. There was *purdah* and segregation of sexes amongst the Muslims, therefore women's committees were required to organize them all over the country. Begum Muhammad Ali, wife of Maulana Muhammad Ali, was placed on the Working Committee of the Muslim League. The women's committees were appointed and we started working actively all over the country.

My husband's health was rapidly deteriorating and in 1936 he had a light stroke, resulting in paralysis of his right arm. He had been suffering from high blood pressure for a couple of years and after the first light stroke he had a very severe attack in June 1937. The doctors practically gave him up, but he rallied round and lived for another thirteen months, nurses attending him most of the time. In 1937, the family did not go to any hill station, but I had to go to Simla to attend the Punjab Assembly Session for a few weeks.

In 1938, my husband was a little better and under doctors' instructions the family moved to Solan. As we arrived in Solan, I received a telegram from my clerk congratulating me on the award of MBE conferred upon me. Again I was perturbed, and when I met Sikandar Hayat I said that he ought not to have recommended me for it. He replied that he could not have left me out after all my work, and I told him about my disapproval of titles and rewards.

An important session of the Punjab Assembly was being held in Simla, where a good deal of legislation was being enacted to guard against the exorbitant usury which the Hindu moneylenders were extracting from the agriculturists of the province. I used to spend five days of the week in Simla, where

I stayed with my elder brother, Mian Muhammad Rafi, and the rest with my family in Solan.

At my request, Sir Chotu Ram allocated an adequate sum of money to start work amongst women in rural areas. The two Financial Commissioners, Mr Brain and Mr Garbett, and I chalked out a scheme of work and it was decided that a Lady Assistant Commissioner for Rural Reconstructions be appointed. We consulted some prominent women workers and Miss Maula Bakhsh, Principal of the Punjab Health School, was selected and appointed.

The Assembly Session finished at the end of July and on my return to Solan I asked Miss Maula Bakhsh to come and stay with me, so that we could work out a syllabus for the new Rural Reconstruction School that was being set up. We had advertised for a number of women volunteers to work on bare living wages in rural areas, and nearly 300 women applied, although for the time being we required only twenty-nine, one for each district. They were to be given nine months' training in the Rural Reconstruction School. It had been decided to start development work of all types under the Peasant Welfare Fund in one district of each division. My idea was to have the teacher, the health visitor, and the Rural Reconstruction worker staying together, messing in the same house and carrying on their work in cooperation with each other. I had persuaded the Industries Minister to open more industrial schools and industrial centres for women, and my plan was to have one industrial teacher also attached to each district. Miss Maula Bakhsh and I worked for ten days and we completed the syllabus for the Reconstruction School.

My husband was much better and was keenly looking forward to the wedding of our younger daughter, Nasim, with Akbar Khan which was to take place in November. The day Miss Maula Bakhsh was about to leave, Shah Nawaz suddenly had a severe stroke and became unconscious. Everything possible was done in the next two days, but he expired on 12 August 1938, at the age of sixty-two. Shah Nawaz was the first member of his branch of the family to will his property according to Muslim

Law, giving his wife and daughters their shares. We returned to Lahore with the body, and during the next forty days I had to see such a large number of people—relations, friends, and tribesmen—that I broke down under the heavy strain, and had to join my sister at Mussoorie under doctor's instructions.

My son Ahmad Shah Nawaz, who had passed the Senior Cambridge examination from the Prince of Wales Military College, Dehra Dun, at the age of fourteen, was too young to be sent to any university abroad and had joined Government College, Lahore. The child went out for a drive with one of his cousins, met with a car accident and hurt his knee badly. I received the telegram in Mussoorie and rushed back to Lahore. Unfortunately, Ahmad's wounds had become septic and this septicaemia, which lasted for over four months, made him dangerously ill. After the first operation I had a consultation with five doctors, one of whom was the Viceroy's physician, and all of them advised me to have his leg amputated. I asked them what chances there were of saving his life, and they replied 10 per cent with the leg and 15 per cent without it. I said that the question of amputation then did not arise, and if he lived, he would live with his leg. Allah heard our prayers, and after four more operations and transfusions his life was saved. To have this trouble so soon after the sad demise of my husband, with so many of the property affairs to be settled, was very taxing. Important decisions that had to be made about the operations, the doctors, his stay in hospital and nursing were no easy matters for me. The hospital authorities said that there had never been so many hundreds of people, high and low, belonging to every section and community, as had visited the hospital and made enquiries about any patient as had been the case during my son's illness. Prayers were being offered for him in mosques, churches, and temples. Throughout his serious illness, Bishop Barnes used to come to bless him on Sundays. I was indeed fortunate that everyone was praying for my child and can never forget the kindness that I met with throughout that period of so much strain and anxiety. The day that Ahmad was to be given a blood transfusion, not only my own relations but a number of

friends from outside the family volunteered to give their blood. After a protracted illness of eight months, God blessed him with health, strength, and a new life.

Sikandar was rising to great heights in his work as Chief Minister and as Leader of the Parliamentary Party and of a responsible house of parliament. Every speech in reply to long-winded speeches of Hindu leaders of the Opposition would be an improvement on his previous one and we felt very proud of him. Moreover, the Party was working on healthy, democratic lines. He was always prepared to consider a good suggestion and, if convinced, would not hesitate to accept it. What I admired in him most was his direct reply to anything that one asked him about. He was never evasive or dilly-dallying and would at once agree if a thing could be done, or apologize if it was not possible. I was very happy to find that, in spite of belonging, as he did, to the old school of thought, Sir Shahabuddin was an independent and courageous Speaker. He was wary of any encroachment on the powers of the Assembly and would not tolerate any interference. He was a very good example of what the Speaker of an independent house of parliament should be.

Unfortunately, the administrators were stereotyped and the ICS was too wedded to the old ways. With freedom, provincial autonomy having been transferred into non-official hands, policy should have been framed by the Ministers and the implementation only should have remained with the permanent officials. This would have been possible if the Ministers had been well-versed in the subjects they had to handle and had had the courage to override the set ways of the Secretaries from the services. Did any of them do so? Only Sikandar Hayat, Sir Chotu Ram, Sir Manohar Lal, and Sir Sunder Singh Majithia did, but not the others. It was because of this that what were known as the 'golden bills' for curtailing exorbitant interest were passed. Agriculture was given priority and some irrigation projects previously thrown into cold storage, like Havelian and Thal, were sanctioned and executed. The work accomplished by the Sikandar Ministry in several spheres was exemplary and Mr C. Rajagopalachari, talking to me once, said that only Madras

and the Punjab did useful, constructive work during the initial stages of Provincial autonomy under the 1935 Constitution.

In England, what had surprised me very much was that only a small percentage of girls were going up to university for higher education. The majority of girls, passing school final examinations, were admitted to what were known as 'finishing schools', or entered professional institutions to take up training of some sort. I remember asking a young girl from a rich family, whose home was at Oxford, which women's college she would be joining. She had passed the London Matriculation examination rather well, but she looked at me and said: 'I am not a blue stocking, why should I join a college? I have been admitted to a finishing school.' 'Blue stockings' were those who did not have much chance of getting married. The finishing schools were more like the Home Economics Schools and as no institutions of that type existed in our country, I knew that this all-important question had to be taken in hand immediately.

In 1929, I had proposed a resolution in the annual session of the Provincial Branch of the All-India Women's Conference calling upon the Government to chalk out a different curriculum for girls' education, which should include important subjects of Home Economics like Dietetics, Child Psychology, Mothercraft, Bookkeeping and others. I had also asked the Punjab University to recognize Home Science as a degree course. In my speech delivered on that platform, I had pointed out that in a country where there were ten million more men than women, it was essential that girls should be given the necessary education for their vocation in life, and taught how to become good housewives and efficient mothers. The All-India Women's Conference had given priority to this all-important subject, and a Home Economics institution named Lady Irwin College had been opened. I requested the Education Minister to utilize the special sum of money given by the Central Government that year in setting up a Home Economics Training School for girls, to produce well-qualified teachers who could then take charge of such subjects in girls' schools. I was anxious that a school of this type be set up in a rural area and the Education Minister,

Mian Abdul Hayee, and I chose a place about twenty miles out of Lahore, named Sharkpur. The school was organized, but unfortunately it was turned into an ordinary teacher-training institution. A Primary Syllabus Committee was formed by the Education Department including some well-known educationists, both foreign and local. The Committee worked for nearly two months and I had the subject of Home Economics included in the new curriculum for girls' schools from the third standard onwards. The Report produced by that Committee was an improvement on many others written before that, but it was placed in cold storage.

In my speeches or otherwise talking to the Minister concerned during 1937–38, I tried my best to draw his attention to the forming of a new policy for education, which should be organized like the pattern of a carpet, so that boys and girls belonging to every cadre of society could be fitted into it and there would be no armies of intellectuals roaming in the streets. I pointed out that, as recommended by Abbott and Wood in their Report, the weeding out of children should begin from the age of eleven onwards, when the primary course finished. The majority of boys from rural areas should be sent to agricultural centres that ought to be established next to the schools, as in Hungary, and they should be given two years' training there to take up their vocation in life, which would be mainly agriculture; the very bright amongst them should continue further studies. Most of the boys from urban areas and the bright children weeded out from rural areas should study up to the seventh or eighth standard and then be sent into industrial centres that ought also to be organized near the schools, and these boys should be given the necessary training for technical work. Only the brightest should go for higher studies to the universities, to qualify for the services and professions, or to become directors, experts, and scientists. Boys trained in industrial centres would form the pools of skilled labour required for the rapid industrialization of the country; competing in world markets would not be possible unless we could first establish such labour.

While dealing with the Medical and Public Health Departments, I found that there was hardly any coordination between the preventive and the curative sides of the work; in fact, there was actual rivalry in certain spheres of their activities and there was too much overlapping, and all this meant obstruction. I advised that these two departments be combined as two wings of one department, and their work so distributed that both should help to eradicate disease and provide medical aid to as large a number of people as possible.

In India, child and maternal mortality were the highest in the world, and I had learnt through experience of my membership of the Infant Welfare Council, as well as during my work in the Red Cross Society, that had initiated the setting up of infant welfare centres all over the Punjab, that reduction of such mortality was possible only through the organization of welfare centres on a large scale. A Punjab Public Health School had been working and health visitors were being trained every year. I advised the Government to enlarge the school, give the health visitors the status of provincial service, and try to establish as many welfare centres as possible. The target I suggested to the Government was 800 welfare centres in the *tehsils* and key villages. As Vice-President of the Punjab Provincial Red Cross Society, when a Minister used to be its President, I had tried to have as many welfare centres as possible initiated and organized in the Punjab, which was foremost at that time in the whole of India in the number of infant welfare centres that were working.

There was no separate maternity hospital, either in Lahore or in any other town, and the number of lady doctors and nurses was very small. I drew the attention of the Government to this, and women's interests were safeguarded in the budgets of those years in the departments of Education, Medical, and Public Health.

Sir Earnest Burden came to see Sikandar Hayat Khan and asked him to release me from the Parliamentary Secretaryship to allow me to take over from Miss Hill, who was retiring from the General Secretaryship of the Central Indian Red Cross Society. He said that the Viceroy wished to combine the

International Women and Children's work with the Red Cross, and wanted me to take charge of it. Sikandar called me to tell me about it, but I refused the offer. We Parliamentary Secretaries had to bear the brunt of the Assembly work. The officials were no longer members of the Provincial Assemblies and the number of questions asked by the Opposition, including the Congress section, was large and varied. Replies to the brilliant speeches of Diwan Chaman Lal, Sir Gokal Chand Narang and others had to be given, and a great deal of other work accomplished.

My daughter Nasim was married in April 1939; the couple went to Europe on holiday and Tazi accompanied them.

The League Council met in Lahore in 1940, and the famous Pakistan Resolution was passed. Just before the meeting, Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman came to see me and he and I talked at length about Muslim League politics and the situation in the Punjab. Throughout my talk I was much impressed by Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman's political sagacity and foresight. I explained to him how difficult it was to carry on a government with a majority of one per cent only, related a number of incidents that I had witnessed, and told him how much I used to feel for a leader in such a difficult position. Khaliquzzaman had come to find out my reaction to a resolution of this type, and after a lengthy discussion we agreed that the Resolution should be passed unanimously. The Council met, the Resolution was passed and it caught the imagination of the Muslim public. In the open session of the League, when the position was most critical because of the Khaksar agitation being at its height, Mr Jinnah handled the situation like a towering statesman. It was his wisdom and courage that saved the Punjab Government, headed by Sikandar, from coming to a headlong clash with the agitators and the situation getting completely out of control. Mr Jinnah lunched with my sister and Bashir. Geti and I sat on his right and left, and I said to him: 'You are sitting between two sisters; better wish for something.' He replied: 'What better than to wish for Pakistan?'

After years of negotiations, talks, and all possible efforts at settlement with the Hindus, Muslims had become disillusioned

and disgusted, and had abandoned all hope of having a united India. The condition of the depressed classes was before them, and Hindu moneylenders still had power over Muslims everywhere. On all sides people started talking of Pakistan, and openly saying that this was the only solution to all their differences and problems. Why should they not ask for a part of the country to be entirely theirs, where they could live according to their beliefs, traditions, civilization, and culture? They resolved to achieve that part, no matter what the sacrifice.

In 1941, when the Second World War was at its height and there was a threat of the Japanese crossing the Indian borders, a Defence Council was nominated for the subcontinent by the Viceroy. The thirty members included the four Muslim Chief Ministers of the Muslim majority provinces and myself as representative of the women of India. The Muslim League decided not to cooperate with it, and asked all Muslims to refuse membership of the Council. I was in a great fix, as Muslims, who had been 72 per cent in the Army, had already been reduced to 52 per cent and it was essential that at least one should remain there to safeguard their interests in the armed forces. I wrote to Mr Jinnah, drawing his attention to this all-important question. I requested him to allow me to remain a member, as I had not been nominated to the Defence Council as a Muslim but as a representative of the women of India, but he did not agree. All the Muslim Chief Ministers, including Sikandar Hayat, resigned and I heard the news on the radio when I was in Gulmarg, Kashmir. I telegraphed to Sikandar immediately, asking him to place my resignation of the membership of the Defence Council before the Working Committee of the Muslim League. He wired back advising me not to take any action until I had seen him. We met in Lahore, and after thrashing everything out we decided, for the sake of Muslim interests, that I should not resign my membership. Soon after my decision a representative of the Orient Press came to see me, when my connection with the Muslim League was severed, and in reply to his question I said: 'I am a born Muslim Leaguer—the Muslim League is my father's child—and I shall die as one.'

When the destinies of the Allies were hanging in the balance and the Japanese were rapidly advancing into Burma, General Sir Claud Auchinleck, the Commander-in-Chief, came over in one of the meetings of the Defence Council and said: 'You know what my Generals have told me? They say that if they had to hand over the Indian Army to any one of the officers tomorrow, they would give the reins to your son-in-law, Colonel Akbar Khan. He is a military genius.' I smiled and thanked him.

The British Government was anxious to have responsible Government composed of all the different races and sections in India, so that they should have a contented subcontinent supporting them wholeheartedly in the War. With this end in view, leading members of Parliament were visiting India and having talks with the political leaders. A full Parliamentary Delegation came out and some of them stayed with my sister and me in Lahore. In March 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps with some other Members of Parliament came out and brought constitutional proposals which were placed before the leaders of all parties. The suggestions were unacceptable to the Muslim League and the Congress also rejected them.

The work of the Defence Council and the tours undertaken to inspect different military centres, workshops and other armament-assembling factories were very educative. The War situation at its lowest ebb and the slow upward trend were discussed. I did my best to safeguard Muslim interests, but in spite of that the percentage of Muslims in the army was further reduced to thirty-five and my apprehensions proved correct. There were a number of outstanding Hindu members, like Mr Kunzru and Mr Mehta, who were all the time fighting for Hindu interests.

I continued to work for Muslim League interests as before. USA and USSR entered the world conflagration and I was asked to organize war work among the women of India. Rules had to be amended to allow Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani and myself to take up appointments with the Government of India without losing membership of the Punjab Legislative Assembly. Sir Percival Griffiths, a colleague of my husband in the Central

Legislative Assembly and a good friend of the family, was the head of the National War Front and he had persuaded me to take up this work. I had a long talk with him and he accepted my suggestion of having the Women's Section stationed in New Delhi as a part of the Information Department. The office was moved to New Delhi and I was placed as Lady-in-Charge of the Women's Section of the Information Department, with the status of a Joint Secretary to the Government of India. The day I took charge of the Women's Section I was given one stenotypist and one *chaprasi*, and I had to carry on propaganda work among women all over India to help the war effort and recruitment.

To be in Delhi during the Second World War, to travel all over the subcontinent, from east to west and from north to south, addressing gatherings of both men and women and coming into contact with every section of the public was a great experience for me. As soon as I took charge of the work, I was asked to travel to USA to attend the Pacific Relations Conference which was being held at Mount Tremblon, in Canada, and to speak at the *Herald Tribune* Forum in New York. A pamphlet on the women's movement in India had to be written, as the office of the Conference had asked for it, and in six days I had to write it, get ready, and leave for USA. Even now I often wonder how I managed to finish the article and pack up within such a short time. Sir Zafrullah and I left in a seaplane at the end of October 1942.

When we reached Cairo, we learnt that the North African operations had started and we would have to take a circuitous route and travel via central and west Africa. As soon as we arrived we received an invitation to lunch with the British Minister of State, Mr Casey, and we were delighted to meet him and his wife. During our three days' stay in Cairo, I had to talk to a press conference, visit a number of war hospitals and work-centres, and speak to a large number of Indian soldiers. Seventeen prominent Egyptian ladies came to welcome me to Cairo with lovely bouquets of flowers. Madam Shahrobi Huda, the leader of the women's movement, was out of town, but her niece and Madame Libya, the second-in-command, were

amongst them. Madame Libya was very kind and they all said that they had been anxious to meet me and had been sorry that I had not visited Cairo during my various trips to Europe, although Mrs Sarojini Naidu, Mrs Pundit and others had met them. I had tea with Madame Libya in her lovely house on the banks of the Nile, where I met her brother, the Education Minister. The next evening I was introduced to a number of young professional women of Cairo at a dinner party, and the progress achieved by the Muslim women of Egypt filled my heart with pleasure.

I went to hear a lecture on Islamiat at the Al-Azhar University and the Shaikh-ul-Islam invited me for coffee. The lecture was very inspiring and I was happy to find that the professor delivering the lecture was emphasizing the spirit and not only the words of different texts and verses of the Holy Quran. I learnt a great deal in that one hour and longed to see a college of that type established in my own country. I was very much impressed by the striking personality of the Shaikh-ul-Islam and found his talk enlightening. While saying goodbye, he blessed me and said: 'So far you have been a leader of women, but I now bless you to be the leader of both men and women.' A lunch had been arranged at the Mina Hotel, situated outside the city, next to the Sphinx. How I longed to spend a couple of weeks at that hotel and study the things all around. In Cairo, Lord Hailey, Lord Hailshome, and Sir Frederick White joined us. Lord Hailey and Sir Frederick were to represent Great Britain at the Institute of Pacific Relations Conference.

From Cairo we went to Khartoum, and from there on to Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo. As we landed at Leopoldville, we found a number of missionaries awaiting the arrival of Lords Hailshome and Hailey. They asked us all to see a few Belgian settlements. They had brought cars with them, as they were keen to show us the condition of the people there. We were horrified to learn of the atrocities and to see the state of affairs in such places. There was no youth left in the villages. A woman of twenty-nine years, pointed out to us, looked a hag of seventy or eighty. The poverty and squalor were abominable and heart-rending, and the conditions were practically primitive.

One could not believe that these places were being ruled by a civilized country like Belgium. We also saw the Congo Falls, which were impressive. After spending one night there, we went to Stanleyville. On both sides of the roads mangoes were hanging on the trees, although it was the end of October and there was thick tropical vegetation all around. The plane stopped next in French Liberia, and then went to Lagos, capital of British Nigeria, which was full of flowering trees. After spending two days at the Government House, we flew to Accra, capital of the Gold Coast (Ghana).

The Government House, Accra, was an old Dutch castle built on the seashore in the seventeenth century, and we had to wait four days there for a plane to take us across the Atlantic Ocean. As soon as we reached the Government House, the Governor asked us whether we would like to attend a garden party given to meet him that afternoon, where some of the African chiefs would be present. I replied that I would not miss it for anything. There were twelve chiefs of different tribes, tall, well-built men with gold crowns on their heads, wearing gold bangles, and strings of beads and bones around their necks. I must have looked just like a Lilliputian beside them. Two of them knew broken English and they talked to me. The whole atmosphere of the party was exactly like India in 1910. I could not have imagined then that Ghana would achieve independence within twenty years. I put the four days spent in Accra to good use visiting different institutions. The Agricultural College and the Children's Hospital were well organized. The standard of living of the people was high, which was not unexpected as the country was rich in gold and ivory. At a children's party arranged at Government House the orchestra of Africans played some of the most difficult European music by ear, and I learnt that they were born musicians. Sir Zafrullah Khan and I left for New York by an army transport plane which flew rather high the whole night, as enemy ships were on the seas, and we crossed the Atlantic in thirteen hours, reaching Brazil in the morning. The plane was flying about thirty-five pilots back to the States to bring more planes for the North African operations. The night

was unforgettable, as to fly so high without any human conveniences in an ordinary military plane of those days was no joke, and the last two hours were almost unbearable. Sir Zafrullah said that he thought that I would pass out in the night. The Governor and his family had done their best to stop me from taking that plane to New York, but I knew that if I did not fly by it I would have to miss the *Herald Tribune* Forum meeting, for which I had travelled all the way from India, so I had decided to go.

After spending one night in Brazil and another in Georgetown, we reached Miami, on the Palm Beach. We travelled to New York by train and reached there on Saturday, 8 November 1942, by lunch-time. The *Herald Tribune* Forum was to meet on the morning of 10th and there was only Sunday in between. On arriving at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, I found Mr Rahman of the Indian Embassy awaiting me. He told me that he had been sent from Washington by the Ambassador, Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, to help me prepare my speech for the Forum. I asked: 'Since when have I needed help for a speech?' He smiled and told me that this was exactly what he had said to the Ambassador. He asked if he could then return to Washington by the next train, and I agreed. After snatching a quick lunch, I sat down to write, as they were asking for the text of the speech by evening at the latest. On Monday, 10 November, I spoke on the Forum platform soon after Maurice Chevalier had finished his speech, and the people were very kind to me. The subject was 'India Fights'. When I shook hands with Maurice Chevalier and talked to him, he asked whether people knew him in India, and I replied that he should come out and see for himself.

Mrs Ogden Reid, proprietress of the *Herald Tribune*, was a wonderful world personality and we women had every reason to be proud of her. The way she handled the Forum and organized everything was exemplary, and I was greatly impressed by her personality, charm of manner, and unique ability. I had gone to New York because of the kind invitation which she had sent me after learning that I was visiting America

as a member of the Indian Delegation to the Pacific Relations Conference. I had the pleasure of enjoying her kind hospitality a number of times and we became staunch friends. I had an opportunity of meeting Mr Salzburger, proprietor of the *New York Times* and his delightful family as well. A meeting was arranged with Mr Windal Wilkie, with whom I talked for almost an hour. His outstanding personality, quick grasp of things, and ability were unique and our talk was informative and most interesting. America lost a great man in his untimely death. I met a number of other interesting and well-known personalities and spoke at various gatherings. When I addressed the East and West Association of New York on 'Islam and Democracy', a number of people talking to me after my speech said that I had shown them a silver-lining in a dark and clouded sky. In Washington, also, where I spent a week with Sir Girja Shankar and Lady Bajpai, I met a number of outstanding persons. Lord Halifax, the British Ambassador, asked me to attend a luncheon arranged by the secretariat officials of the American Government, where I spoke to them and had to reply to a number of questions about conditions in India for almost three hours.

Wherever I went, I was surprised and pained to find that Congress propaganda against Muslim aspirations had been adverse and twisted, and people in America were completely ignorant of the social and political conditions prevailing in India. Strange and absurd questions were asked wherever I went, like: 'Why don't you Muslims quit India? You have no right to be there' and remarks like: 'India belongs to the Hindus'. Congress representatives, especially Mr J.J. Singh and his band of workers, had been exploiting the ignorance not only of the average American citizen but of responsible officials as well. I was perturbed, and I realized that a great deal of counter-propaganda would be required to undo the mischief wrought by the so-called 'Indian patriots'.

We travelled to Canada for the Institute of Pacific Relations Conference in the middle of November 1942. Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar and Sir Zafrullah Khan were the leaders of the Indian delegation. We spent a couple of days in Montreal, and a few

more in Toronto. I addressed a number of women's clubs and dined with the Canadian branch of the British Institute of International affairs. Fortunately, Sir Howard-de-Egville, Secretary of the Institute and a good friend of my family, was visiting Canada and he was also present at the dinner. Everywhere I explained the Muslim case and threw light on the political situation in India. The meetings of the women's clubs were largely attended and I was informed that the gate was broken at one of the luncheon parties arranged by a women's club in Toronto for me. I found that the Canadians were very hospitable and friendly people. Several women came and clasped me as a sister, and I was delighted to meet so many cultured ladies.

The Conference was held at Mount Tremblon, which was over one hundred miles away from Toronto, right in the heart of the hills. There was seven feet of snow all around and the lake was frozen. Only the delegates to the Conference and the secretaries were there; reporters were not allowed and the proceedings were strictly private. I had already met Mr Carter, the Secretary-General, and his wife in New York.

The War was at a critical stage and a number of Generals of the Allied armies appeared before the Conference, and then two or three Chinese Generals. After the opening session, the Conference was split up into four Round Table Conferences—Economic, India, China, and General or Political. Mr Tarr, one of the Canadian representatives, was presiding at the India Round Table Conference. I was allocated to the China Round Table Conference and while it was sitting, Colonel S.B. Shah, one of the secretaries of our delegation, came to see me and asked me to leave the China Round Table Conference and attend the India Conference. Sir Zafrullah Khan was the President of the Economic Round Table Conference and Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar was representing India at the India Round Table Conference. Colonel Shah felt that, although he sympathized with Muslim aspirations, a Muslim should also be present during the proceedings when Mr Khanna was to present the Hindu case, in order to deal with all Mr Khanna's points. I requested

Sir Ramaswami, the leader, to allow me to supplement his points if in the interests of my nation I considered it necessary, and he agreed. Mr Khanna's presentation of the case was strange and shocking. He started by saying that there were no Muslim majority provinces in India at all, and it was a fallacy to say that any such areas existed in the subcontinent. I just looked at him. He went on to say that the British had carved a province of overwhelmingly Muslim areas out of the Punjab State and named it the North-West Frontier Province, without any demand from the Muslims. The Punjab had a majority of 6 per cent Muslims and the Frontier had 7 per cent Hindus in the population, so it was due to the separation of the two areas that these two places became Muslim majority provinces. The audience that he was talking to knew nothing about the population or extent of the areas, or the conditions in India. Similarly, Sindh, a part of Bombay Presidency, had been cut away from Bombay, and whereas in the whole Presidency there were only 35 per cent Muslims, the majority Muslim area so taken away was turned into a Muslim majority province. While he was speaking, I was wondering how he was going to prove that Bengal was not a Muslim majority province. He said that the majority of the Muslim population in East Bengal was nothing but migratory labour that wandered about, spending years in one place before moving on, and they did not belong to the soil. This was the gist of his speech, which he explained at length, showing one map the areas that had been cut up and turned into separate provinces. He had even told the Conference that the British Government, in order to divide and rule, had carved out the Sindh and Frontier Provinces and had made the Hindu and Muslim nations fight each other. It was hinted that Mr Jinnah's asking for partition was a put-up affair. In all my life I had never heard anybody giving such a fantastic account of the situation in India, and the Muslim case twisted in such a spurious manner. After the Leader, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, had presented the true state of affairs in India, I spoke and, taking up most of the points raised by Mr Khanna, dealt with them at length. Professor Khizar of Hereford University, a member of the Conference, told me

later that they were glad to get to know the real facts of the case.

After the Conference I was to visit Ottawa and stay with Mr MacDonald, the British Governor-General of Canada, when I received a cable from Lord Halifax, the British Ambassador in Washington, informing me that an interview had been arranged with Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt at the White House and I had to fly back from Canada to America immediately. I had one hour's talk with Mrs Roosevelt, who was decidedly an outstanding lady of great ability. As it had been snowing hard, the flights had been cancelled and I had to catch a train from New York which arrived in Washington at 1 a.m. I caught a chill and on my return to New York had to lie in bed for a couple of days.

Mr Khanna rang me up at 11 p.m. on 27 December 1941, and he gave me the sad news of Sikandar Hayat's sudden death and other developments in the Punjab. I was stunned and extremely grieved, for this was not only a great personal loss for me, but I felt that his untimely demise at that juncture would bring chaos to the Province, as there was no one of his stature, integrity, and tact to carry on the work. He had been like a brother to me, and I knew that I had to return home as soon as possible. I cancelled all my engagements for that fortnight and asked the Indian and the British Embassies to arrange for my passage back home by air. In the two weeks that I spent there awaiting a passage I did see New York, both old and new, visiting most of the well-known places with my secretary, and I was greatly impressed with the Natural History Museum, the Planetarium, and the art galleries. I met Mr Clarke Getts, head of one of the well-known touring agencies, and his wife Mrs Martin Hunter. I had seen the One Million Dollar Room, dedicated to Mr Martin Hunter in the Natural History Museum and I was very glad to have had the opportunity of meeting his wife, who had accompanied her husband on most of the expeditions.

I flew back home by the first four-engine plane to come to India via Africa and Arabia, stopping at Fisherman's Lake, Maiduguru (North Nigeria), Gura (Eritrea), and Aden.

On my return to Delhi, I went to see Mr Jinnah and explained the whole situation prevailing in America and begged him to arrange for counter-propaganda to safeguard Muslim interests. The Muslim residents in New York, and especially Muslim League workers like Mr Muzaffar Ahmad, had already informed Mr Jinnah about the services that I was fortunately able to render to the Muslim League and my nation. We had a heart-to-heart talk and I told him how sorry I was for not obeying him in resigning from the Defence Council, which I should have done. He said that Shaukat Hayat had told him about the telegram that I had sent to Sikandar Hayat about my resignation from the Defence Council. I was happy to know that Mr Jinnah's representatives in New York had been regularly informing him about my work for the Muslim cause and he thanked me for it. I told Mr Jinnah that I was prepared to resign my post any time that he required me to do so, and nothing could give me greater pleasure than to serve the cause which was so dear to me. I also said that, after learning what the Hindus had been doing during their propaganda work in America and Canada, I had returned home more convinced than ever that Pakistan was the only solution to the Muslim problems in India, and I was staunchly behind him in achieving it.

My daughter Mumtaz had been of a Nationalistic point of view and had leanings towards the Congress. In a small dinner party in New Delhi one evening, I said in front of Mr Jinnah that I would give one thousand rupees to the League the day Mumtaz joined it. Mr Jinnah immediately said that the two *annas* that Tazi would be paying as a membership fee, with conviction and belief in League ideals, would be more precious to him than any donation. During the Parliamentary Delegation and the Cabinet Mission talks and negotiations, Tazi's belief in the so-called Nationalism was shattered; she saw Mr Jinnah and me, joined the Muslim League and volunteered for work. She was given charge of work amongst women in Old Delhi and within a couple of months, the Congress women workers started saying that Tazi had changed the whole atmosphere, and had made women believe in the Muslim League overnight. After

every talk with Mr Jinnah she would return home full of enthusiasm. She often said that to work for a leader like Mr Jinnah was not only a joy but one felt elated to be one of the members of his corps of workers. This was the spirit that a leader of his calibre infused into young and old alike.

From 1942 until 15 October 1945, in the course of my work for the Women's Section, I toured the whole of the subcontinent, from the Khyber Pass to the borders of Burma and from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, speaking to large gatherings of both men and women. I gained an overall impression of the whole country and came in contact with people belonging to every race and community. Throughout my tours I had been fortunate in not having any untoward incident. My father's friends were Governors and Chief Ministers of most of the provinces and States and they were very kind and hospitable to me. During my tours I used to stay mostly at Government Houses or would be the guest of the ruling princes, and sometimes I stayed with the Residents in the States. Mr Casey had been appointed Governor of Bengal and I stayed with them at Government House, Calcutta, twice. I learnt of Shaukat Hayat's resignation as a Minister of the Punjab Cabinet during my stay with the Caseys, and I sent my resignation from the Unionist Party from Calcutta and informed the Governor about it. If I were to write of my experiences during my tours, it would be a separate book in itself. I shall never forget one memorable day in Poona when I had to address five meetings of completely different audiences one after the other. I had a representative of the Associated Press and another of the *Times of India* with me in the car, both of whom were greatly impressed by the end of the meetings.

During my tours, certain incidents had opened my eyes and I had come to know how conscious the common people in the subcontinent were becoming of their basic rights as human beings, and that they could demand the basic necessities of life from any administration. The old belief in one being born with a golden spoon in his mouth and the other with a beggar's bowl in his hand, that it was fate and one must resign oneself to it, was rapidly changing and the people were not only whispering

against it but actually talking of working for their legitimate rights. I had realized for some time that the old capitalist system was no longer suitable for the world of today and the intelligentsia of every country, especially the young intellectuals, were revolting against it. I had asked a few young men of the foremost aristocratic families of Great Britain to lunch with me one day in Oxford, in June 1933, and their talk was nothing but rank communism. It was the year when the Oxford Union had passed a resolution not to fight for their king and country. The next evening, I was dining with Sir Samuel Hoare in London and I told him about it. Similarly, young people of other countries were talking in the same strain and were feeling for the poor and needy. The more I pondered over all this, the more I believed that extreme forms of socialism—Nazism, Fascism, and Communism—were mere experiments and out of the fusion of all these ultimately a new system would be evolved which would be more lasting. What that system would be, nobody could say, but it was obvious that it would be based on a clear understanding of the basic rights of human beings, which could not be trampled underfoot; a system probably based on extreme socialism, without tampering with the individual's freedom and liberty.

To find people wide awake and conscious of their rights as human beings even in remote corners of my country was indeed an eye-opener for me. I had gone to a place called Sikandarpura in the Hazara District of the North-West Frontier Province, forty-five miles away from any railway station, to meet the women members of soldiers' families and a couple of thousand of them turned up. Amongst them I saw some of the most beautiful faces that I had ever seen in my life. I was lunching with the teacher of a primary school and she told me that her pay was only Rs. 20 per month and any raise asked for was turned down. Then she said quietly: 'Let them go on doing it, our time is coming soon.' Similarly, in the corridor of an office I heard some *chaprasis* talking. One asked the other whether he had heard that the proposed raise in pay had not been sanctioned. The other replied: 'Why worry, brother? Our time is coming

and then these *bara sahibs* will be dealt with and they will know.' I used to tell the high Government officials all this and would always advise them to bear in mind the awakening of the people all over the subcontinent, in fact, in every country in Asia.

I had been asking the Government to set up a Women's and Children's Bureau in the Government of India, on the lines of those in England, America, and other countries. I had been anxious to see the establishment of offices of this type in the Central Government as well as in all the provinces, and had been advocating them for some time. I knew that it was a golden opportunity for me to have this section so organized that it could be turned easily into a bureau of the type that I had in mind. With a view to this, along with my war work, I started collecting the information required and went on pressing the Government to make this section a pool for information and suggestions for women's recruitment to different posts, and for the general advancement of the womanhood of India. In this important work, Sir Sultan Ahmad, the Information Member, and Sir Frederick Puckle, Secretary of the Department, were very helpful. Within two years I had a Deputy Secretary and an Assistant Secretary appointed; a magazine started with two efficient editors (Begum Zeenat Rashid, a brilliant writer in English with a degree from Cambridge and a Hindu lady of high qualifications) in charge; and an office with a personal assistant and a number of clerks and *chaprasis* fully organized, including one woman clerk and one woman *chaprasi*. Information had been collected and coloured maps prepared to show the position of women in different spheres. Moreover, the Government had been approached to regard this section as advisers for the appointment of women of the right type in different capacities. A Mrs Taimini, who had been educated in England and was related to the Nehru family, had been recruited as Deputy Secretary and an Indian Christian lady, Miss Bashiruddin, Inspectress of Schools (Punjab), was appointed Assistant Secretary. Contacts had been established with prominent women workers of every province and Indian

States and with outstanding women of most other countries. After three years' work, when I handed over charge of the office, I left behind 315 files systematically kept and a full history of the women's movement in India. I was asked to speak on this question in a representative gathering in Simla where Kamla Devi Chattopadhya was also present. She talked to Sarojini Naidu and she asked me to write a pamphlet for them, as she said that they did not know much about the Muslim women's work and the work done by the European ladies, which I had traced in my speech. The article was written and sent to her and a copy of it was preserved in the office.

When I talked to Sultan Ahmad about the organization of Women's and Children's Bureaux all over India, he asked me to prepare a scheme, and Mrs Taimini and I chalked it out after careful planning. Both the Hon. Member and the Secretary liked it, and it was discussed and approved by the Viceroy and the Executive Council, but the Finance Department did not accept it.

One day I received a file in which the Establishment Officer of the Government of India said that, as there was a shortage of personnel in the administrative services because of a number of officers working in the different war offices, it had been decided to recruit a number of persons from outside. I wrote a strong note immediately, asking the Government of India to give well-educated women a chance to serve during this period of difficulty. Within a few days I received a reply from the Establishment Officer, saying that they would be glad to recruit women if I suggested the names of women with administrative experience. The note arrived just as the office was about to close and I found that even the PA had left. I sat down and penned a reply immediately in which I pointed out that, women not having been given any opportunities to enter administrative services, the names of women with such experience could not be supplied. I pointed out that, after all, a number of us were already working and Mrs Vijaya Lakhshmi Pundit, a Minister in the United Provinces, Mrs Hansa Mehta, a Parliamentary Secretary in Bombay, and I myself had not possessed any

administrative experience, and I appealed to them that women should be recruited in order to give them a chance to show how they could work. The Government agreed, but even I, while organizing my own office, learnt the truth of what the Establishment Office had said about the importance of administrative experience. The work of administration was a technical subject and required training through experience, and I am sure that one of the main reasons for the mess in political administrative affairs since Partition has been this lack of experience.

I had just returned from a long tour of the south of India when I went to see Sir Percival Griffiths and he asked if my ears had been burning. I enquired why. He said His Excellency had told him that most of the National War Front officers had said that 'one tour of Begum Shah Nawaz was worth thousands of pamphlets'. The reason for this was that, wherever I spoke, what I said came from the bottom of my heart: it was what I sincerely felt about the War effort. Since America and Russia had entered the War, I knew that every effort had to be made to help to win the War. India must not lag behind any country in saving democracy from complete annihilation.

The more I toured in the south of India, the more I realized that we people from the north had very little in common with most of the races living in the south. I had the pleasure of meeting the delegates from the southern states and provinces for the first time during the annual session of the All-India Women's Conference held in Delhi in 1928. When I returned to my room after meeting them, I kept thinking over the differences between them and the people from the north. I had glimpses of life in the homes of women in different areas throughout the subcontinent, and of their looks and appearances. Can I ever forget the impression I gained when, soon after my tour in the Travancore State, where I had addressed a women's meeting, I went to a place in the North-West Frontier Province? There was so much contrast between these races that for me it was an education in itself.

At a dinner party in New Delhi, I learnt that I was to be awarded a title that summer. In the morning I saw Sir Percival Griffiths and asked him whether there was any truth in the rumour. He told me that the Government was thinking about it. I asked him to tell them not to do so, as I did not like titles and my own name was good enough for me. When Sir Sultan Ahmad learnt about it, he asked me why not; when Gurmani was to become a Nawab and Bokhari a CIE not to give me anything would be very difficult. I replied: 'Uncle, please do not spoil my work by giving me a title. Your kind appreciation of it is more than sufficient for me. Service has its own reward and nothing else is required for it.'

In June 1945, Lord Wavell convened a conference of the leaders of the different prominent parties of India in Simla, and the question of setting up a coalition ministry was discussed. In an agreed plan of running the administration, the Congress Party insisted on the inclusion of one of the Nationalist Muslims, who they said were the real representatives of the Muslim nation, but later, for the sake of a compromise, the Viceroy suggested the inclusion of an independent, non-party Muslim. I felt that it was my duty to help in the matter and I talked with Mr Jinnah. I requested him to allow me to talk to Malik Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, who was the Chief Minister of the Punjab. I had learnt that while the other three Chief Ministers of the Muslim majority provinces, where the Muslim League ministries were in power, were agreeing to such a proposal, Khizar Hayat, as head of the Unionist Ministry in the Punjab, was not prepared to accept it. Mr Jinnah told me to go ahead. Khizar Hayat's family and mine had been great friends for generations and his father, General Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, had always looked upon me as his own niece. I went to see Khizar with great hopes, and after a long talk he agreed to accept the proposal and asked me to request Mr Jinnah to give a guarantee of good treatment in the Muslim League for him and his followers. Khizar's party had been turned out of the Muslim League after their refusal to form a Muslim League Ministry in the Punjab. The Congress Governments in all the other provinces had not included a single

Muslim Leaguer in forming ministries and had committed the greatest blunder of having only the so-called Nationalist Muslims. This had infuriated the Muslims in India, because in their struggle for Pakistan practically all sections among the Muslims, except a small proportion of Nationalist Muslims in each area, had joined hands and gathered under the flag of Mr Jinnah and the Muslim League. The Muslim nation was asking for Pakistan with one voice, and knowing all this, for a political party like the Indian National Congress, and outstanding leaders like Mr Gandhi and Jawahar Lal Nehru, not to have coalition Ministries and come to a settlement with the Muslim League to form coalition Ministries, was something which one could not fathom. Moreover, because of the non-inclusion of Muslim Leaguers in the Congress Ministries, and in consequence of the strong antagonism because of the lack of settlement between the two major communities in the subcontinent, flagrant mistakes were being committed in Muslim minority provinces which were further alienating the two major nations from each other from day to day. In fact, communal riots were not distant.

Soon after meeting Khizar Hayat, I went to see Mr Jinnah in the Cecil Hotel, Simla, and told him about it. He was happy to learn the good news, smiled, and said:

> If Khizar agreed with the proposal of the inclusion of an independent Muslim, he would become the uncrowned king of the Muslims and the League would welcome him and his followers with open arms. He has my sincere assurance; but he ought to know that if, after such an action on his part, I did anything against him, Muslims would lynch even me.

I saw Khizar again and gave him Mr Jinnah's message and asked him to write a letter to Mr Jinnah to that effect and give it to me. He promised to do so in the morning and send it to me. The next morning when I rang him up, Khizar started talking in a completely different tone and said that, having given his promise to Sir Reginald Glancy, the Governor, he, as a soldier, could not deviate from it, and so had decided not to do anything.

I told him that we had covered all that ground the day before and had together come to a final decision: what had happened during the night that had made him change his mind? He did not reply to my question, but said that his refusal was final. I was very perturbed and went to see Mian Abdul Hayee, the Education Minister of his Cabinet, and Mr Ashiq Hussain, the Revenue Minister, and both of them promised to see Khizar Hayat that very evening and help me to persuade him to write the letter to Mr Jinnah. In fact, both were glad to learn that I had been trying for a settlement with Mr Jinnah's approval and that the terms had been settled, and only the sudden last-minute intransigence of Khizar stood in the way. Unfortunately, even their efforts were not crowned with success.

A few days later, when Tazi returned from a dinner party at the Cecil Hotel late at night, she came to my room and woke me up, and said that the negotiations were breaking down completely and the Parliamentary Delegation would be returning to England soon. She was almost in tears when she said to me: 'Mummy, for God's sake do something to save the country from turmoil.' I thought for some time and decided to see Mr Gandhi in the morning. I rang up Rajkumari Amritkaur, as Mr Gandhi was staying in her house, and asked for an interview. Being a Monday, it was Gandhiji's day of silence, but he agreed to see me that morning. I went and told him of what I had learnt in the night and how disappointed I had been on receiving the sad news. I said that while thinking over it I had asked myself a question: what would my father or my husband have done if they had been alive? The voice of my conscience had told me to come round and talk to Mr Gandhi. Then I clasped my hands before him and said that it was nearly fourteen years before that my father had done that in London, and today, I, his daughter, was again doing it as Father had then, to save India from bloodshed and suffering. I pleaded with Gandhiji to persuade the Congress Working Committee to agree to the inclusion of an Independent, and not insist on having a Nationalist Muslim in the Cabinet. Moreover, Muslims, almost to one man, were standing under Mr Jinnah's flag and there was a golden

opportunity for the Congress to settle with the Muslim nation as a whole, which had not been the case in 1931. A handful of Muslim Nationalists must not stand in the way of such an important decision. Statesmanship demanded that it should not be so. He quietly nodded his head in agreement and after saying goodbye, when I went to the next room, Rajkumari Amritkaur told me to go and see Maulana Azad. Both Tazi and I went to see not only Maulana Azad but Jawahar Lal Nehru as well, but returned home disappointed.

The negotiations broke down and we left Simla at the end of June 1945. When we reached Kalka, and entered the corridor of the train to Delhi, I met Mr Durga Das of the *Tribune*. After salutations, he said to me that we were cowards; the Muslim League Working Committee should have had the courage to throw Mr Jinnah overboard. The Working Committee of the Congress did not accept the inclusion of an Independent Muslim although Mr Gandhi wanted it. Even Jawahar Lal sided with Mr Patel. I quietly said; 'You will know the result of such a blunder one day,' and I turned away. Both Tazi and I knew that Gandhiji had done his best, which I thought he would.

Elections were called in the Punjab and I resigned the Joint Secretaryship of the Government of India on 15 October 1945. The period of a little over three years that I worked in the Government of India was one of the most crucial periods in the constitutional history of the subcontinent. My elder brother, Mian Muhammad Rafi, had asked a number of friends to tea just the day before I left New Delhi. Mr R.K. Nehru, one of the Secretaries to the Government, said to me at the party that I was not being wise in joining the Muslim League movement at that juncture, as the organization would be losing badly in the Punjab. He said that Malik Khizar Hayat and the Unionist Party had collected forty lac rupees, and what chance could the poor Muslim League possibly have of defeating them? I smiled and said: 'Let us see what happens.' On my return to Lahore, I started working actively for the elections.

My sister, Geti Ara, was the President of the Punjab Muslim League Women's Committee. I had been placed on the Central

Women's Committee as well as on the Provincial Committee. As soon as the movement for Pakistan had been started in earnest, Fatima Begum, who had been the Inspectress of Schools in Bombay for ten years, had resigned her post and returned to the Punjab. She had set up a girls' college in her own house which she named the Jinnah College, and the opening ceremony had been performed by Mr Jinnah himself. My sister and Fatima Begum wanted me to take over the Presidentship of the Women's Committee, but I refused, saying that I would like to work as a two-*anna* member only. The members of the Committee were doing excellent work infusing a spirit of service and a desire for freedom and for the achievement of Pakistan amongst women everywhere. Tazi and I together helped to re-organize the work all over the Province. Divisional and district conveners and committees were appointed and were placed in the hands of well-educated, active young women workers, and work towards our success in the elections went on briskly and enthusiastically. On my return, when I met Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana and asked him about the chances of the League, he said that the majority seats would be won by the League, but it would be a bare majority only. Extensive tours were undertaken and everywhere Tazi and I addressed women as well as mixed gatherings. Mr Jinnah, during one of his visits to Lahore, asked me what I considered would be the number of seats by which the Muslim League would win. He said that Mumtaz had told him that the League would win a little over fifty seats out of the eighty-four Muslim seats in the Assembly. I replied that I had every hope that the League would get at least sixty seats, but if the expected landslide occurred, more than seventy seats could be won. I was in charge of the office in the days before the elections. Suddenly, people started pouring in from a number of districts to inform us that the delegates were running short of petrol. Petrol had been rationed and permits had to be obtained from the officials. I went to the Deputy Commissioner of Lahore, Mr MacDonald, persuaded him to give permits for 2000 gallons and rushed them to different places immediately. Two days after that the results started

pouring in and the Muslim League was succeeding almost everywhere. I sent a telegram to Mr Jinnah informing him of our exceptional success. Of the eighty Muslim seats in the Punjab Assembly, Muslims had won seventy-four. Khizar Hayat with his five or six followers joined hands with the Hindus and Sikhs to form a Congress Ministry in the Province in 1946, and we sat on the Opposition benches.

A Ministry composed of the representatives of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League had been set up in the Centre and included Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, and Raja Ghazanfar Ali.

Interesting sessions of the Punjab Assembly were held during which the party in power was being exposed from day to day by us on the Opposition benches. Muslims in the province were up in arms and people would not tolerate a purely Congress Ministry rule when the nation happened to be Muslim Leaguers. There was turmoil in the whole of the subcontinent and everywhere Muslims were strengthening the Muslim League organization to such an extent that the division of the country was becoming inevitable.

In 1946, Lord Attlee, the Prime Minister and head of the Labour Party, sent a Parliamentary Delegation which included three Ministers: Lord Pethick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps, and Mr A.V. Alexander. This delegation consulted leaders of all political parties as well as rulers of the Indian States. In May, 1946, the proposals for the new constitutional reforms were published. They proposed and placed before the subcontinent a compromise plan in two parts, long-term and short-term. The long-term plan was the setting up of a Constituent Assembly divided into three sections, provinces, groups of provinces, and a strictly limited Union Centre. The short-term plan provided for three tiers and an interim coalition Government consisting of the Congress, Muslim League, and the minorities' representatives. Mr Jinnah, on behalf of the Muslim League, accepted the proposals immediately, but the Congress Working Committee, after twenty-four days' long deliberations, agreed to it with reservations, especially in connection with the

grouping of provinces. The result was that the last chance of coming to a settlement without the division of the subcontinent was lost by the short-sightedness of the leaders of the Indian National Congress. A statesman like Mr Jinnah knew that, if he accepted the proposals, the Congress would try and find fault with them and, as he told me later in London, he was trembling in his shoes, because he never wanted to accept them.

Statesmanship demanded that when the overwhelming majority of the Muslims had joined the Muslim League and had taken up the slogan of Pakistan, Hindu leaders should have formed coalition ministries with the Muslim League everywhere, and by doing so won the confidence of the Muslim nation. The so-called Nationalist Muslims, who represented nobody, were placed in Cabinet seats meant for Muslims, as stooges of the Congress, and Muslim interests were being thrown overboard. India had to be partitioned, and after the failure of the Cabinet Mission even the British Government realized this.

When Tazi was in Simla, Mirza Abul Hassan Ispahani, the Raja of Mahmoodabad, and she had tea with Sir Stafford Cripps. After talking different political matters, he said to Tazi: 'Miss Shah Nawaz, if you could convince me that Pakistan as envisaged by the Quaid-i-Azam [Jinnah] and the Muslim League would be a viable state, we shall have no hesitation in giving it to you.' She gave facts and figures and all three Muslims tried to convince him.

The Punjab Assembly elected its quota of members to the Constituent Assembly in 1946. Begum Shaista Ikramullah from East Pakistan and I, from West Pakistan, were the only women elected to the Central Assembly.

Mr Jinnah asked Mr Hassan Ispahani and me to go to America to explain the case of the Muslim League to the United Nations Organization delegations as well as to the American public. Hassan and I toured America for over two months from the end of October 1946, until the end of December, when we went to San Francisco. When we arrived in New York and tried to contact the heads of the delegations to the United Nations Organization, we were surprised to find that, in spite of our

repeated efforts, the leaders were trying to avoid seeing us. On probing matters, we came to know that they did not wish to offend India and Mrs Vijaya Lakshmi Pundit, and even delegations from Muslim countries were not prepared to meet us. After waiting for over a week and receiving no replies to our letters, we decided to pull a few strings. At last we managed to meet the heads of a number of delegations, including Senator Austin, the leader of the American delegation. We met Prince Allah Khan, the Iranian Ambassador in Washington, had an interview with Mr Dean Aitchison, then Under-Secretary of State in America, when Mr Loy Henderson was also present. Both possessed very keen minds and we placed the Muslim League case before them at length. An invitation had been received from the *Herald Tribune* Forum, asking the Muslim League and the National Congress to present their cases on the *Herald Tribune* platform, and it was decided that Hassan should advocate the cause, as Mr Krishna Menon was to appear on behalf of the Congress. Hassan's personality was impressive and his speech was well received and applauded. Mr Menon and Mrs Pundit on behalf of the Congress, and Mr Ispahani and I as representatives of the Muslim League, appeared on the platform. I was much impressed by Hassan's ability, his fervour and devotion to the cause, and his love for Mr Jinnah.

As on my previous visit, we were surprised to find the amazing ignorance prevailing in America about the conditions in the Indian subcontinent. Strong Congress propaganda, without any counter-work on behalf of the Muslim League, except that of a few sympathizers here and there and of the handful of Muslim students studying in the American universities, had kept the American people completely in the dark. In fact, Congress workers had supplied them with incorrect information. We learnt that the Muslim settlers in Arizona and California were giving Congress workers a great deal of money. When they learnt that we, the Muslim League delegation, were visiting America, they rang up several times asking us to visit both States, as they were anxious to know the real situation in India.

Mrs Ogden Reid was very kind and she introduced us to a number of leaders of public opinion. Mr Salzburger of the *New Times* asked Mr Ispahani and me to lunch with his whole staff; we explained the League case to them and he was most helpful and kind. The friendships that I had made in 1942 stood us in good stead in promoting the cause of the League, and I was happy that such sincere contacts were strengthened during my second trip to America in 1946. Mrs Ogden Reid and I came much closer to each other and my high opinion of her ability increased by these further contacts.

My son, Ahmad Shah Nawaz, after coming first in his M.Sc. at Delhi University, had gone to America to join the Massachusetts Institute of Technology early in 1944, and was taking his doctorate in Chemical Engineering there. Mrs Ogden Reid had been most helpful in securing a place for him when 7000 boys were on the waiting list for admission.

As it was snowing hard and there had been mishaps to two aeroplanes, Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, the Indian Ambassador, advised us not to go on to Arizona and California. In spite of this, we decided to go and our plane battled with a snow storm for one and a half hours, but we landed safely in Phoenix, capital of Arizona State. As the plane arrived, we saw about sixty or seventy Muslims standing with garlands made of small chrysanthemum flowers. As I got out of the plane, Mr Rustam Khan, with tears of happiness rolling down his cheeks, came forward and blessed me. He told us that he had said goodbye to my father, who had been just like a brother to him, in 1910 at our house, *Iqbal Manzil*, in Lahore, and it had been his life's ambition to welcome me to his own home in Phoenix. We were the guests of the Muslim settlers and we stayed at the Biltmon Hotel. A meeting was addressed by both Mr Ispahani and myself at which the Governor was to preside, but he had a heart attack and Mr Garvey, the Secretary of State, took his place. He said in his speech that the Punjabi settlers were good citizens and excellent agriculturists, and Americans were happy to have them living in the State. We found that most of these people had migrated to Arizona between 1910 and 1915, and had bought

land, each owning from 125 acres up to a couple of thousand acres. Most of them had married Mexican girls and had well-educated children. They had built nice villas on their farms and were getting high yields from their land through modern methods of agriculture. As many of them had not been to India since their arrival, they were still thinking of their country as they had left it before 1915. The Phoenix Muslims brought 1000 dollars as a present for me. I looked at them in surprise and they said that the sum was for me to buy a *sari*. I said, first of all, that a *sari* did not cost so much; secondly, I would be delighted to accept a present from them, if they gave me a bag or a small souvenir; and that if they wanted to give any sum of money, they could do so to the Muslim League. They said that they had given similar presents of money to Hindu women leaders, mentioning a few names and the sums they had accepted from them. I told them that it was my principle not to do so and I could not deviate from it.

After spending a couple of days with them, we went to Sacramento, the capital of California, which was the headquarters of the Muslim Brotherhood. The ignorance of the members of that organization was heart-rending, and Hassan and I spent hours explaining matters and trying to convince them in order to secure their support for the creation of Pakistan. Mr Syed Hussain, Mr Sharda Rani and others had filled their minds with so much wrong information about Mr Jinnah and the Muslim League that it took us two days to make them understand the Muslim case for division and for the realization of Pakistan. They became staunch supporters of the Muslim League case and we learned that a great deal of money had been given by them to Congress workers. I was asked by Mr Rahmatullah, the Secretary of the Association, to lay the foundation stone of the mosque in Sacramento, which I did. The office-holders and members of the Muslim Brotherhood were enlightened persons and were doing good work. We addressed a meeting of practically all the Indian settlers in Sacramento, over 800 in number, including Hindus and Sikhs. From Sacramento, we went to San Francisco, where we met a number of interesting

people. I lunched at the high table of one of the women's colleges, spoke to the girls and spent two pleasant hours with them. San Francisco was one of the loveliest ports I had ever been to. It was a unique harbour.

Throughout my tour of America I was much impressed by the sunny, hospitable temperament of the people. I said on the platform of the East and West Association: 'I am delighted to meet a race of people in the West who are so human in temperament.' Young women standing at shop counters, taxi drivers and all sorts of people used to ask me to tell them something about India, Mr Gandhi, or Mr Nehru. Moreover, I found them eager to collect information, very willing and ready to learn, and if one convinced them one could depend upon their support. I found that Americans were industrious and they were the type who, once they took up a cause, would not spare themselves to achieve success. They lacked an old and seasoned background, and were young in spirit.

With great belief in a world organization like the United Nations, based as it had been on a word-perfect charter of human rights, I had gone to America keenly looking forward to the pleasure of seeing it working. Had I not told thousands of people, in every corner of my country, what the new world would be like when the Allies won the War? Thousands of soldiers in different places had heard my words spellbound. Did I not tell them that they need not have any doubts, when the USA and the USSR were fighting side by side to free humanity from the tyranny of systems like Nazism and Fascism? Would they rather have those, or the democracy of Great Britain and USA and the common man's friendship with USSR? The rapt faces looking up with eager and expectant eyes were ever before me. Those dreams were to be realized by the United Nations Organization and with such aspirations I had reached New York.

The United Nations Organization was all there, with its full paraphernalia, and one section of a country's people had come to explain their case to those taking part in it, but they were not allowed to enter a single door or to contact any delegation. Why? Because a Mrs Vijaya Lakshmi Pundit would not like it,

or a Mr Jawahar Lal Nehru would be upset. The atmosphere was the same as of old, spheres of influence and nations forming into blocs. Already, even in 1946, the Allies had split up, and instead of a Nazi Germany and a Fascist Italy on one side and Great Britain, USSR, USA and France on the other, one could see other blocs of a different type coming into existence. Whispers could be heard all around, like the strange remark I heard: 'Why did we not take the shirt off the back of the Russians while we were at it before demobilizing?' My dream of a world collaboration was shattered and there did not seem to be any hope for humanity. I felt that, just as there had been no peace in the world after the First World War, similarly there would not be any collaboration of humanity as a whole for a long time to come. What of the picture of a new world I had presented during my tours? Where was it? Could I ever again show my face to all those people? If in this world organization, based on a perfect charter, the same way of working in blocs and parties was to go on, God help human beings!

On our return to New York we received a cable from Mr Jinnah asking us both to join him. He had been called by the British Government for talks and he and Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan had already reached London, so we left America at once.

The ten or twelve days that I spent in London with Mr Jinnah were memorable. We were delighted to learn from him that our work in America had borne fruit. It had become clear that the American Government had impressed upon the British Government that the situation in India should be tackled before it deteriorated further and the Muslim case should be given due consideration. Mr Jinnah showed us a letter from the Prime Minister, and we were happy to know that Pakistan might soon be realized. I accompanied Mr Jinnah and Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan when they were asked to visit the House of Commons during the debate on Indian affairs and we sat together in the Speaker's Gallery. Mrs Vijaya Lakshmi Pundit was also present in another gallery.

While in London, Dr Buchman, founder of the Moral Rearmament Movement, invited Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan to see their play and have supper with him, and wanted me to persuade Jinnah to accept the invitation. Hassan and I had seen the play in America and I told Mr Jinnah about it. The invitation was accepted. When we went to Dr Buchman's house, I said that I had asked Mr Jinnah to attend the supper because I wanted Londoners to know him. On that, one of the guests said: 'London knows Mr Jinnah.' I replied: 'No, London knows of him, but does not know him.' Mr Jinnah was the life and soul of the party, talked of his grandchildren and told us a number of anecdotes. Some of the guests thanked me for providing an opportunity for them to get to know the real Jinnah.

We lunched with Mr Jinnah a number of times at Claridges Hotel, where he was staying. Hassan Ispahani had been talking about the Punjabi Muslims, the so-called 'sword-arm', who had done nothing practical to achieve Pakistan. I listened quietly for two or three days and then I could not stand it any more. I protested that it was not the rank and file, but the leaders, who were responsible for it. Mr Jinnah asked at once: 'What do you mean by leaders? Today, every Muslim Leaguer is a leader.' I said if that was so, the Punjab would not lag behind other provinces in working for their ideal.

Lady Hartog invited a number of prominent office-holders of different women's organizations and other responsible women workers in London, to whom I explained the stand of the Muslim League at length. They asked me a number of questions. Just before I left London, Mr Jinnah, who had been very kind, said that the Muslim League could not forget the services that I had rendered in America. Hassan had been writing to him all about my contacts in America and how useful these had been in serving the Muslim cause.

I returned home on 21 December 1946. My first granddaughter was born on 13 January 1947, and she was given the name of Jahan Ara.

During my absence, communal riots had broken out in Bihar and massacres of innocent Muslim men, women, and children

had taken place on a large scale. Fatima Begum, with a band of women workers, had been to Patna and had toured the areas round about it. The tales of harrowing scenes that they related to me made me feel very sad. Hindus had tried to exterminate the small percentage of the Muslim population there; people had been hacked to pieces and women had been violated. Fatima Begum had brought a number of destitute women and children with her and the Women's Committee was trying to rehabilitate them. The repercussions of such an unwarranted massacre had taken place in Bengal and there had been communal riots in Calcutta as well. Mr Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy's ministry in Bengal had succeeded in stopping them in time, and not allowing trouble to flare up on a large scale. In the Punjab itself, incidents were taking place every day and there was great apprehension of riots breaking out in many towns. People were restive and the situation was tense, and I was pained to see it.

On 29 January 1947, the Punjab Congress Government, without any rhyme or reason, suddenly ordered the sealing of the Muslim League and the National Guard offices in Lahore. We received the news early in the morning, and Tazi and I rushed to the League office. Shaukat Hayat Khan and Mian Iftikharuddin had already arrived and were standing in front of the door, resisting the sealing up by the police. When Iftikhar saw us, he told Tazi to rush to the National Guard office, take charge of it and stop the police entering it: she replied that they would do so over her dead body. She took a small number of women National Guards and sat in the office, blocking the entry of the police. Meanwhile, the other leaders had started arriving one by one, and some of them stood silently by, while others tried to remonstrate with us and stop us from resisting the order. Firoz Khan Noon and Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, the President of the Punjab Muslim League, said to everybody that they should all go and take part in the Friday prayers. Firoz took Iftikhar aside, and while he was still trying to persuade him to give up resistance, I was standing nearby. In a loud voice I said, immediately in front of a line of journalists present: 'Let all the men give up. We women shall start the civil

disobedience movement.' Later on, Sheikh Karamat Ali, a member of the Punjab Muslim League Committee, told me that Firoz Khan Noon had said in the meeting of the Punjab Muslim League Committee that they would have persuaded men members to yield had not I, a woman, stood in the way. I felt very strongly that the Government had no right to crush civil liberties and stop a natural freedom movement from gathering force. Freedom must be for each and all, and not only for one party, and on a question like this we had to make a stand and not go on putting up with every possible insult that the Congress Government was hurling at our nation. Seven of us were taken into custody, including Firoz Khan Noon, Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, Mian Mumtaz Daultana, Shaukat Hayat, Mian Iftikharuddin, Begum Kamaluddin, and myself. Within a few days some other women, Fatima Begum, Begum Tassaduq Hussain, Tazi, and Begum Karim Dad, with a number of girl students who had been tear-gassed, were also imprisoned and all thirteen of us were lodged in the Lahore Female Jail.

After four or five days, the seven of us originally imprisoned were released. Huge public meetings were held in the *maidan* (open field) at Mochi Gate and were addressed by prominent leaders of the Muslim League. After the meeting, they would lead huge processions to the houses of the Chief Minister or the Revenue Minister, or to the Government House, and place the Muslims' claim for the formation of Pakistan before the public. 'Long live Quaid-i-Azam' would be voiced freely and people requested to work unitedly to secure Pakistan. One day, when we were leading a procession to the Revenue Minister's house, some of the officials took us in cars and, after driving for miles, released us all at distant places and most of the leaders had to return home walking. Mr Eustace, the Deputy Commissioner of Lahore, took me on a long drive and then left me at the gate of my house. A couple of days after that, early in the morning, I received a telephone message from the Muslim League office informing me that almost all the responsible office-bearers and outstanding personalities of the Punjab Muslim League had been imprisoned overnight and, except for a clerk, there was no one

in the office. I had been left behind; I knew my duty, and drove straight to the office to study the conditions there. I rang up my sister, Geti Ara (President, Punjab Muslim League Women's Committee) and asked her to send sufficient money to the League office. Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot (President, Punjab Muslim League) had named a number of persons as successive Presidents in case he was put behind bars. All but two or three had been imprisoned. I called a few National Guards and asked them to fetch the next named President who was still free so that he should take charge of the office. From there, I went straight to the house of Mian Abdul Aziz, the Mayor of Lahore, and called a number of Muslim members of the Lahore Corporation and talked to them at length. I told them that, as the honour of the nation was at stake, it was for them to show that the movement was not confined to a handful of leaders only, but was the united voice of the whole nation: we had to hold a meeting at the same place and have an even larger number of Muslims attending it than before, to voice their strong resentment at the imprisonment of the leaders as well as help to continue the fight for Pakistan. They promised to do their best.

Meanwhile, I learnt that Dr Malik, Principal of Islamia College, had also been taken into custody and a meeting of the professors and students was being held at Islamia College. The boys of Islamia College had rendered yeoman service to the cause of freedom by spreading themselves into the villages and helping to make the rural population politically conscious and making them love the ideal for which we were fighting. The Congress Government could not tolerate this and that is why such action had been taken against them. I went straight to the College, and speaking from the platform told the professors and boys that it was for them to continue to fight the battle for freedom in the absence of the leaders, and requested them to organize similar meetings and processions every day. I told them that I would be courting imprisonment that afternoon and it was for them to provide staunch, faithful leaders to carry on the battle for liberty. At the end, I said that the movement for freedom was being left in the hands of those students who had

so far been the staunch soldiers of the Muslim League, and I expected them to continue the struggle as before. Then I asked them to give me two professors and ten boys from amongst them who would court imprisonment with me that afternoon. Professors Ilmuddin Salik and Allama Alauddin Siddiqi volunteered and the meeting at Mochi Gate as usual took place at two o'clock. Meanwhile, my sister, my mother, and Tazi had been to different areas of Lahore, talked to the people and helped to swell the ranks of the audience. Through Tazi's efforts, even a bulletin had been printed which was distributed in the meeting. Before going home, I went back to the League office and found the named President there. I told him of all that had been done and requested him to attend the meeting. Then I asked him for orders. He just looked at me and said: 'Orders, from me to you?' I said orders should come from him; he was the President and I was there to obey as a soldier. He was surprised and asked me to continue as before.

The Mochi Gate meeting was attended by a large number of people and was a great success. Representatives of the Corporation, leading lawyers and other outstanding persons who had not been sent to jail, both men and women, were there. Sixty of us were to court imprisonment, and we were all garlanded. I spoke to the meeting and then I asked them to march with me to the Civil Secretariat. From the Mochi Gate, I took them there through the Hindu and Sikh quarters, where we called upon the people, irrespective of caste and colour, to join the procession, as we were fighting for civil liberties. I reminded them of Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru's fight for freedom and for civil liberties. Some of us made short speeches at the corners and then the procession went on. I do not know how that long distance was covered by me when I was already tired, working and running about since the morning. When we arrived at the gate of the Civil Secretariat the offices had not closed and Sir Evan Jenkins, the Governor, was still working in his office. I took the procession through the gate, made people sit down, and just as I was about to address them someone brought a chair for me to stand on. As I opened my lips to speak, what should I see

but a posse of European police *lathi*-charging the crowd in front of me. There were nearly one lac of people in that procession and they were all sitting down quietly. I jumped from the chair, rushed into the crowd of people and went straight to the line of policemen, telling them not to beat peaceful people, but to *lathi*-charge me. My scarf had fallen to the ground, I put my hands behind my back and stood there. I shall never forget the moment when the British police put their *lathis* behind them and would not charge me. I know that a poor Inspector of Police had to suffer because of it. A number of officials, including the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, were there. Mr Eustace, the Deputy Commissioner, came forward and said to me that, as they were afraid of a breach of peace in the compound of the Secretariat because of such a large crowd, the *lathi*-charge was to disperse them. Would I take responsibility for them going home peacefully and not causing any disturbance? I looked at the sea of faces before me, knew that I could trust them, and I replied that the responsibility was mine if all the officials withdrew from the scene. Meanwhile, most of my family, including my mother, had arrived. As soon as the officials withdrew to one side, I got on the chair and told the people what had happened. I said to them: 'Sisters and brothers, now my honour is in your hands and I request you to listen to my speech, then quietly go back to your homes and help me to fulfil my undertaking.' I looked at them and said: 'I know that I can trust you to show of what metal you are made,' then I spoke for about forty minutes, calling upon the Government, the Governor, and the officials to see the upsurge of the Muslim nation, and realize that they were standing united under the flag of the Muslim League and that Pakistan had to be given to them. Muslims would never tolerate Hindu majority rule, because they did not wish to become part and parcel of the 'depressed classes'. I appealed to the people to remain calm, as the success of the movement depended upon their zeal and peacefulness. They had to find leaders from among themselves if the present leaders were in jails and carry on the movement until Pakistan was achieved. After that, I asked the sixty persons who were to court imprisonment to collect in one

place and I went up to Mr Eustace and told him that we were ready to go to prison. We were put in lorries and taken to the Civil Line police station. The crowd dispersed peacefully, without even a murmur from any one. While a couple of us, with some of the officials, were sitting in the Police Station, Mother ordered tea for us all and the manager of the restaurant next door brought it himself. I poured tea and said to the officials: 'Once in your life, drink tea from the hands of a prisoner.' They smiled, and we all had tea together. I was taken to the Female Jail to join my companions.

The citizens of Lahore carried on the movement for over one month and, in spite of repeated provocations by other communities and of the death of a young Muslim, the movement remained peaceful and gathered tremendous force. While in jail, we were glad to learn that all over the Punjab women were marching in processions and were forcing their men to join the Muslim League and fight peacefully for the creation of Pakistan. In Lahore itself, my sister, Geti Ara, organized the work, and practically every day, and sometimes even twice a day, huge processions of women marched on the roads shouting for 'Pakistan' and calling upon the Government not to deny the Muslim nation their legitimate share in the Government of the country. The processions were *lathi*-charged and women were tear-gassed, including my mother, Lady Shafi, who was leading a procession. Prominent women leaders like Lady Hidayatullah and others from different provinces had also come to Lahore and taken part in the processions. Tazi refused to sit still even in jail and she, along with the other girl students, made a Muslim League flag out of their *dopattas* and quietly climbed to the roof of the jail and planted it there. The Lady Superintendent, a Sikh lady, had Tazi beaten and she fainted. When the women Leaguers outside learnt of this they were furious, and a huge procession marched to the gate of the women's jail shouting slogans.

After one month and three days we were all released. The public meeting that was held soon after that was something memorable, and over half a million people must have been

present. So well organized and so peaceful, they came in batches and quietly sat down, and Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, Mumtaz Daultana, Raja Ghazanfar Ali, Shaukat Hayat, and I addressed the meeting. The enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds and those who witnessed that meeting realized that such an upsurge of a nation could not be trampled underfoot. The Khizar Ministry resigned that evening, the British Government decided to concede Pakistan and the Congress leaders agreed to its creation. The Sikhs and Hindus of the Punjab had been threatening bloodshed and suddenly Master Tara Singh and others started holding meetings and brandishing swords (March 1947). In some places, buildings had been set on fire and the exodus of Hindus quietly started.

Early one morning at the end of March, I was informed that there had been a Sikh attack on the Muslim population of Rajgarh (a suburb of Lahore) and that one of my uncles had been shot. I rushed to the office, took Mr Latif Afghani, a National Guard officer, with me, and we reached the spot in time to see the last Sikh attack with our own eyes. I went with my uncle to the hospital and handed him over to the doctors to extract the bullet. Mr Latif Afghani took my aunt and others, about twenty-two in number, including four Hindus, to my house. From the hospital I went to Government House. They were all asleep. I asked the *chaprasi* to wake up an ADG, and as soon as he came I told him about it all and asked him to convey my message to Sir Evan Jenkins, the Governor. I told him that I had come to take the Governor with me, as we wanted him to see with his own eyes the unwarranted attack of the Sikhs on peaceful Muslims at Rajgarh. Whenever we had complained of such incidents, pointing out that all this was the result of unreasonable Sikh and Hindu attitudes and their unwillingness to give the Muslims their due share of self-government, we had been told that such happenings were the result of the Muslims' militancy. We had made it clear, over and over again, that the threats of the Sikhs and Hindus had been planned to stop Muslims securing their rightful majority governments in important provinces of the Punjab and Bengal,

but the Government had taken no notice of our warnings and had done nothing to stop them. The Sikh States in the Punjab had been organizing genocide for some time past and the British Government had been overlooking it. This was an opportunity for Sir Evan Jenkins to see things with his own eyes, and for us to give a positive proof of what we had been saying to the Government. Meanwhile, the Governor had come out on the verandah and I saw him sitting down to breakfast. The Secretary came and told me that the Deputy Inspector-General of Police had been asked to visit the spot, and the Governor could not go. I turned away disillusioned and disgusted, and went to the actual spot of the attack. A number of dead bodies, including that of a young girl of seven or eight years of age, were lying in the central quad and a box full of bombs was still there. The leaders had arrived and I went to the hospital to see my uncle, who had been operated on and had the bullet extracted from his back. The refugees stayed with me for three or four weeks.

City after city had fires and massacres, the Sikhs and the Hindus tried to carry out their threat that if Pakistan was conceded there would be genocide everywhere. Muslims were not going to be intimidated by such happenings. In fact, this helped to strengthen the movement for Pakistan. Whispers were heard that some of the British officials who were against the idea of the division of the country had been actively helping the people behind these massacres.

Suddenly news started pouring in of butchering and massacres in several new places, especially in Amritsar and Jullundur, and the repercussions of it all led to the beginning of killings in the Rawalpindi and Muzaffargarh districts. What amounted to pitched battles were being fought between Sikhs and Muslims in different streets and *mohallas* in Amritsar. A terrible butchering of Muslims took place in one of the well-known streets of Amritsar, Chauk Yadgar area, and I visited the spot with Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, who was one of the Muslim League Ministers in the Central Cabinet. That morning, Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru had visited the spot with an escort of police but Nishtar refused to have a police van with him. It was a

predominantly Sikh area and when our car passed through the streets there were ferocious-looking men with long *kirpans* standing on both sides of the street. Arms were banned for everyone else, but the Sikhs were allowed to keep the *kirpan* (a sword-like weapon) as their religious emblem. The small emblem had been turned into long swords and Sikhs alone had arms in an unarmed population. In my whole life I had never seen such warlike figures. We visited a number of places; houses where women had been hung by their hair and there were still pools of blood; where little children had been pinned on spikes before the eyes of their parents, and where the houses of the Muslim population had been burnt with the residents locked inside. Just as we were coming out of one house, a young man of about twenty years of age came forward and asked us to see the debris of his ancestral home, which was only a few yards away. While we were standing on the spot, the young man, with tears rolling down his cheeks, took up a few bones and said to me: 'Sister, what can I offer you but the bones of my parents during your first visit to our house!' Both of his parents and a young sister had been burnt to death while he was working in a press elsewhere, and on his return home he saw only the ruins of his home and the bones of his dear ones. There were almost similar happenings in other places. We visited Amritsar on three different occasions, and during our visits we witnessed a pitched battle being fought in one of the streets. Shaukat Hayat, who had been a Minister in the Provincial Cabinet, was with us and he did his best to stop it. Amritsar had an overwhelming majority of Sikhs, the famous Sikh shrine of Darbar Sahib was there, and the Muslim population was a small minority.

In the beginning of April 1947, Tazi, who had been resting in her room next to mine, suddenly came and said that she had just had a strange dream and asked me to listen to it. Then she told me that she had seen Mr Jinnah standing with a tray full of delicious food—roast chicken, sweet bread and other delicacies—and Miss Fatima Jinnah could be seen at a distance from him. Suddenly, she saw four men in brown uniforms, with loaded pistols in their hands, coming towards Mr Jinnah to shoot

him. She rushed towards him, stood in front of him and said: 'First I.' Then she woke up at once. I thought over the dream, but I told her that, as both of them had remained safe, there was nothing much to worry about. Soon after that we went to Delhi for the League Council meeting and the Khaksars, dressed in *khaki*, tried to enter the hall. Tazi immediately went and stood in front of Mr Jinnah and, turning towards me, said that her dream had come true. But, no, it had not then.

I received a telephone message from the Lahore Government House, asking me to travel to New Delhi, as the Viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten would like me to dine with him the next day. As soon as I reached New Delhi, I went to see Mr Jinnah and told him about the message that I had received. I was glad to learn from him that he and Miss Jinnah, and Nawabzada and Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan were also dining with the Viceroy that evening. It was the same day that Mr Jinnah talked to me of a constitution for Pakistan. He told me that he had been working on a constitution for the last fifteen months and it was almost ready. He also said that he had based it more or less on the new French Constitution. I went all over New Delhi to get a copy of the French Constitution, but I could not find one.

In the evening, when we reached the Viceroy's house, we found that the Maharaja of Patiala was already there. After dinner, Lord Mountbatten came and sat near me, and whispered in my ear that he had practically kidnapped the Maharaja from Chehl. He said that this was the last chance for the Muslims to settle with the Sikhs. He said that he had called me to New Delhi to help him in his efforts for settlement. He told me that if we did not come to a settlement, the Punjab and Bengal would have to be divided and there would be no way out of it. He had forced Patiala to have a talk with Mr Jinnah directly, so that an agreed solution might be found. Jinnah and the Maharaja sat together on one sofa and talked, and later Liaquat Ali was asked to join them. We were at the Viceroy's house until nearly twelve o'clock. Just before leaving, I told Mr Jinnah all that the Viceroy had said to me. I learnt from Mr Jinnah that he was to meet the Maharaja again the next day. I went to see Mr Jinnah in the

morning and we had a long, frank talk. The negotiations went on and Mr Jinnah agreed to give the Sikhs a compact Sikh State within the Punjab. In spite of it, they insisted on having a separate Sikh army. This, of course, was out of the question, and the negotiations broke down. I returned home very disappointed.

As soon as Pakistan was conceded by the British, and the Congress agreed to it, Jinnah gave permission to the Punjab Muslim League Assembly party to choose any person that they would like to have as their Leader. Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, Mian Mumtaz Khan Daultana, and Shaukat Hayat Khan, who had fought hard battles and were staunch Muslim Leaguers, had been the first to stand under the flag of the Muslim League in spite of the strong opposition of the Unionist Party. Unfortunately, they were young and raw and often at variance with each other within the Party. Jinnah felt that their constant squabbles would be harmful to the Party, and in June and July 1945, during the negotiations in Simla, he had talked to us about it, and both Tazi and I advised him to ask Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani to join and make him the Leader. Gurmani and I had worked together in the Sikandar Ministry, and had joined the government of India at the same time and under the same circumstances. The Provincial Assembly rules had been modified for both of us to take up war work without losing our seats in the provincial legislature. He had been put in charge of Labour when I took over as head of the Women's Section. I had always found that Mr Gurmani studied the subject in hand diligently, devoting himself to knowing his brief, and he was a very good speaker. Jinnah replied that he had already thought of Gurmani and had contacted him, but he had refused to give up his work. Tazi and I volunteered to persuade him to resign and join the movement. Next morning, I rang up Gurmani and he asked me to lunch with him. We had a long talk, but he still refused. I gathered from the conversation that he was doubtful of the League's success. When we saw Jinnah again, we came to know that there had been further quarrels between the young Punjab leaders and Tazi asked Jinnah to let her try

once more to persuade Gurmani to resign. She went to see him and did all she could to make him agree, but without any success, and this was an emphatic refusal. After resigning from the Women's Section and returning to Punjab politics, throughout my two years' work in the Punjab Muslim League from 1945 until 1947, I had come to know that our young leaders of the Punjab, however sincere and able they might be, would not be able to run a Cabinet successfully. There was a complete lack of administrative experience and knowledge to handle the difficult problems that the nation was facing; the vision and imagination required to carry each and all with them were just not there, and I was worried about it. If they could not organize their own offices properly and left the handling of important matters to the ordinary clerks, how could national departments be run efficiently by them: I came to know of Mr Jinnah's decision to give a free hand to the Muslim Leaguers in the Punjab in July 1947. A new Leader was to be elected and in the interests of my nation, in spite of the opposition of my family, I decided to back Firoz Khan Noon. I had not worked with him, except for a few years in the Punjab Red Cross, but I thought that he was elderly, with a number of years' experience of administration both in the provincial and central governments and he had held responsible positions, and would therefore be able to exercise greater control and wisdom. What was urgently required was to cast off all prejudices against each other. We needed experience of handling people of different schools of thought in such a manner that no one's back would be put up, knowledge of the intricacies of statecraft, and the know-how of bringing about cohesion and unity within the Party, whether in the legislature or outside. It was clear that, however able a person might be, without such administrative qualities a Ministry could not be run efficiently and smoothly. I thought that Firoz would be better than any of the three young men, although they were very dear to me. They were sons of those with whom my family had connections for generations, with whom I had worked as an aunt, and for whom I had sincere affection and esteem. Moreover, not only was I fond of them but I admired them for

their ability and staunchness to the cause of the Muslim League. In spite of all this, my sad experience of working with them for two years was compelling me to vote for an elderly gentleman, who I thought possessed more experience and sagacity.

On my return from a trip to Murree, I learnt of the sad death of Syed Ashiq Hussain, Minister of Revenue, who had been shot dead by a Hindu. He was married to Shaukat Hayat's cousin. While attending his funeral, Shaukat took me aside and asked me to help Mamdot's election as Leader. He said that, of course, the three of them and I would form the Punjab Ministry. My reply was that, without one or two elderly persons, the Cabinet formed of the three of them and I could not make the Ministry a success, and my sincere advice to them was to elect Firoz as a Leader and form a Ministry with him. Shaukat further said that I would be committing a great blunder in backing Firoz, as Liaquat wanted Mamdot to be elected as Leader. Mumtaz Daultana rang me up soon after lunch and his talk was exactly similar to that of Shaukat. Just as Tazi and I were finishing our dinner that night, Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot came to see us and had a long talk with Tazi. She told him the reason why I was reluctant to support him, although I had sincere affection for him and his family. He told Tazi that he was one of those who made very good friends and believed in being once a friend, always a friend, but who were relentless opponents. He left after about an hour and Tazi and I had a discussion about it. She said I should do what my conscience told me, but she thought I should not back Firoz against Mamdot. Other members of my family also gave the same advice, but in spite of this I helped Firoz, while Liaquat was supporting Mamdot. Of course, Firoz lost and Mamdot won in the Party meeting. A Ministry was formed by the Nawab of Mamdot, with my cousin Mian Iftikharuddin as one of the Ministers. Iftikhar resigned within two months and again I was approached to accept a ministership, but my reply remained the same. Firoz was asked to join as a Minister, but he declined, and things remained as before.

While all the other provinces had been allocated to Pakistan or India, Dr Khan Sahib, the Chief Minister of the Congress Government in the North-West Frontier Province, had made the British agree to a referendum being conducted in the North-West Frontier Province to ascertain the wishes of the people as to which dominion they would like to join. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a leader of the Red Shirts and head of the Khudai Khidmatgar Party, and his brother Dr Khan Sahib thought that the people of the North-West Frontier Province would opt for India because of their leaning towards the Indian National Congress. Throughout the freedom movement the liberty-loving people of the Frontier Province, especially the Pathans led by these two brothers, had sided more with the Congress than with the League, and depending on the strength of such sentiments, the Khan brothers were almost sure of their success. They did not realize that the new state of Pakistan was the creation of all the freedom-loving elements amongst the Muslim nation in India and that once the Muslim Leaguers explained their case to the Muslim majority population of the North-West Frontier Province the Khan brothers were bound to fail in their efforts. As soon as the dates of the referendum were announced, prominent members of the Muslim League Women's Committee spread themselves through the main towns of the Frontier Province and helped to arouse political consciousness and love for the new Muslim State amongst the women of the province. They were led by Fatima Begum and the processions of women in Peshawar became a byword for bravery. The Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar, Colonel S.B. Shah, a relation of mine, told me that he was informed about women squatting on the railway line just before the mail train was due. He rushed to the place in his car, fearing that by the time he reached there they would have been cut into pieces. He was relieved to find that the engine driver had managed to stop the train just a few feet away from them.

All over the province, Muslim men and women were trying by a peaceful civil disobedience movement to cripple the Government's work, in order to force them to concede Pakistan as soon as possible and make people agree to it. Tazi had joined

the women workers and was touring all over Peshawar. She delivered twenty-one speeches round about and inside Dr Khan Sahib's own village, Utmanzai. Most of the other women, including Fatima Begum, had put on *burqas* in order to work in a conservative province like the North-West Frontier Province, but Tazi would not wear a *burqa*. After Tazi's return to Lahore, I went to the Frontier and visited a number of towns, addressing gatherings of both men and women everywhere. My family's associations with the province had been of very long standing. My father-in-law, Mian Zahooruddin, having practised in the Frontier Province for over twenty-eight years, and my father and husband having had practically all the legal work of outstanding families of the province in their hands in the Punjab High Court, our relations with the influential families were strong and unbreakable. Moreover, Father's work in securing equal status for the province had not been forgotten. People had welcomed me profusely after my return from the Round Table Conference and during my first visit to Abbottabad and, later, throughout my tours in the province in connection with work, I had addressed a number of meetings of women, as well as of both men and women, and the people had been very kind and hospitable. During this visit of mine, members of different families again showed the same friendliness and, whether in Peshawar or in other places, I stayed in the houses of friends of my family. In my speeches, I explained at length why partition had become inevitable, told them of my experience in working for settlement between the Hindus and Muslims and appealed to them to vote to join Pakistan. The members of my son-in-law Brigadier Akbar Khan's family were very kind and I addressed a meeting arranged in a place next to Dr Khan Sahib's house in Utmanzai, which was Akbar's family village as well. I presided at a men's meeting of over 20,000 in Kohat. Akbar's father, Haji Muhammad Akram Khan, took me across the Kohat pass into the transborder area, where the Khans had arranged a gathering. Fatima Begum, Begum Tassaduq Hussain and I addressed the Khawanin. Begum Shirin Wahab, wife of a leading lawyer of North-West Frontier Province, wearing *burqa*,

translated our speeches into Pashto. We went without any *burqas* to the area, yet the Khawanin were very kind and respectful. We were taken around to see an armament factory of tribesmen and I was surprised to see the finish of the guns and pistols that were being made there, which were as good as those manufactured in any European factory. The poverty of the workers and of the people round about was appalling. I gave an undertaking on behalf of the League High Command that an armament factory would be set up in that area when Pakistan came into existence. I was surprised to find how sympathetic the Khawanin were to the idea of the creation of a new Muslim state. The old hills round about, the colouring of their rocks and the general appearance was interesting. As I had always been interested in physiography, even with a layman's eye I could see that the rocks in the area were full of minerals and some day a good deal of wealth would come out of them. After my tour in the Frontier Province, I became quite sure of the success of the referendum in favour of Pakistan.

When the Nawabzada and Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan went to visit the Frontier Province after the success of the Muslim League in the referendum, Rana said to me that Liaquat thought she might have to put on a *burqa* and I told her all about our visit to the transborder area without *burqas*, the respect with which we had been treated, and how I had been impressed by the wonderful physique, the extraordinarily acute common sense, and outstanding personalities of the Pathans as a race.

The exodus of Hindus and Sikhs from the Punjab had started, and caravan after caravan of them was leaving the cities and rural areas of West Pakistan. Suddenly, similar caravans of Muslims started arriving from the East Punjab and other places. The two Governments were to be installed, one in New Delhi and the other in Karachi, on 14 August 1947, and Viceroy Lord Louis Mountabatten was to address the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Lord Radcliffe had been holding meetings and the cases of different parties had been placed before him with facts and figures by outstanding lawyers. People were anxiously awaiting the announcement of the Radcliffe Award.

Tazi and I left for Karachi on 9 August 1947, and we stayed at the Palace Hotel, where a number of other members of the Assembly were also staying. Mr Jinnah was to take the oath as Governor-General of Pakistan on the morning of the 14th and on the 13th evening we were all having dinner at the same hotel when the names of the first Central Cabinet of Pakistan were announced. We, with Mr Hassan Ispahani, Mr Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, then Chief Minister of Bengal, and Mr Altaf Hussain, Editor of *Dawn*, Karachi, were all dining at the same table. Seven ministers had been appointed and from Bengal a Mr Fazlur Rahman—a name which most of us had never heard and very few people seemed to know anything about—had been included. All the outstanding Bengal leaders had been left out. Nawab Muahmmad Ismail Khan and the Raja of Mahmoodabad had not been encouraged to come to Pakistan, and some other members of the Muslim League Working Committee who could have handled a number of departments creditably were not included in the Cabinet. It was clear that only Prime Minister Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan's yes-men had been included. What a short-sighted policy, that in a Ministry none who could come up to the Prime Minister's ability had been included, and instead of having the best available talent in the country handling each department, some unknown persons had been selected! Moreover, the appointment of only seven ministers was inadequate. As soon as the Bengal leaders saw the list, Hassan left the table, Suhrawardy and Altaf Hussain were very depressed, and none of us knew what to say. This was not the case in the Centre only but in every province, whichever party came into power appointed their own stooges only, so that in some cases persons were given departments about which they knew nothing. In many places, staunch and able leaders who possessed administrative experience had been left out. Moreover, even during the elections to the Provincial Assemblies, the Muslim League tickets for election to the Assemblies were given to the favourites of the men in power. What a tragedy for a young nation with a superhuman task before it, that during the crucial years of its development it should be placed in the hands

of inexperienced people. Could there have been a greater blunder than this? The unstable foundations were thus laid, and constant changes after that were inevitable.

It was at the reception to meet Lord Louis Mountbatten at the Governor-General's house that we learnt of the Radcliffe Award giving the Muslim majority district including Gurdaspur, the roadway to Kashmir, to India, and about the division of the provinces of the Punjab and Bengal. The Radcliffe Award came as a bombshell to all Muslims, including those who had been working with him, because until that date they had been given to understand that the Muslim majority areas of Gurdaspur district would, *ipso facto*, be included in Pakistan. It was a great blow to all Muslims, even Mr Jinnah. He had put his full trust in Radcliffe and no one could have imagined that, if not the whole district, at least the majority areas would not be given to Pakistan. Over and above this, the partition of both the major provinces and the lines of demarcation were not just and fair. During the opening session of the Constituent Assembly, one could see that Mr Jinnah and Lord Louis Mountbatten were not cordial to each other. The reception had been arranged on Independence Day, but because of such depressing news a gloom hung over it and there was no jubilation at all.

Tazi and I returned from Karachi on 18 August 1947. News of the influx of lacs of refugees, train-loads of Muslims and compartments full of blood or dead bodies, had been filling the air of Karachi, so we rushed to Lahore after spending only nine days there. My uncle, Mian Abdur Rashid, the Chief Justice of Pakistan, who had gone to administer the oath of office to Mr Jinnah in Karachi, asked Tazi and myself to travel with him by the same plane. When we reached our house, we found that in the bungalows on both sides Hindu and Gurkha soldiers had been stationed.

An exodus of Muslims had begun from the East Punjab and people were pouring into Pakistan at Wagha, Khem Karan, and other crossing places. A number of responsible citizens from Amritsar saw me and related incredible tales of happenings in Amritsar. Cart-loads of dead bodies were sent to Muslim houses

and Muslim women were made to march naked in the streets. We learnt that over one lac of the Muslim population had gathered in Sharifpura, one of the Muslim majority suburbs in Amritsar, and that the Sikhs were going to attack them that very night, and were begged to look into the matter immediately. I rang up a few officials, but they all said that such rumours were being heard everywhere and one should take them with a grain of salt, but we knew that the news was correct. Tazi immediately devised a plan and she went and saw the representative of the *Herald Tribune* and two or three other reporters of well-known foreign papers and asked them to go and spend the night there, so that the Sikhs should think twice before attacking the poor, unarmed Muslims. They agreed to do so, but they had no conveyance to take them to Amritsar, so she gave them her own car and returned home in a taxi.

Killings started round about the city of Lahore and the Muslims in a Sikh village named Gunj, quite close to our village, Baghbanpura, were in danger of an attack. We came to know of this at about half-past eleven at night and Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, the Leader, was informed, but he said that there was no one to go there at that time of the night. Would Tazi rest? She went there with a few arms and Khan Muhammad Aslam Khan, Brigadier Akbar's brother, at 1 a.m. and they arrived just in time to save the situation.

The Nawab of Mamdot rang me up at 10 p.m. one evening and said that he had learnt from a reliable source that Batala city was to be attacked by the Sikhs that very night. The place was full of our tribesmen and the whole family of my aunt, Lady Rashid, was there. He asked me to do whatever I could to save a huge massacre. Soon after the receipt of this message, Mian Ahmad Saeed, a cousin of Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, rang up and gave me the same news and begged me to do something, as Batala was the seat of their family as well. I was very upset and I rang up Miss Maqueen, niece of Sir Francis Mudie, the Governor. She told me that the Governor had not been well and had gone to sleep, but I requested her to ask him to talk to me, as it was very urgent. He spoke to me on the telephone and

I appealed to him to ring up the Governor-General of India, Lord Louis Mountbatten, and try to save Batala. I had sent my car to fetch Uncle Rashid and on his arrival I made him telephone Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru, to ask him to prevent the massacre of the Muslims of Batala. Uncle talked to Punditji and he promised to do his best. My mother was in New Delhi at the time, staying with my brother, Mian Muhammad Rafi, Secretary of the Central Assembly. I telephoned her and asked her to see Punditji early next morning and request him to help the Muslims in Batala. She saw Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru, who respected her a lot, and he promised to help in the matter. Tazi and I could not sleep the whole night but, thank God, Batala was saved.

Early next morning, we were having our breakfast when we heard someone crying and shrieking. The servants came and told us that a gentleman named Chaudhri Shafqat Rasul, a very influential tribesman from the Ferozepur district, had arrived and was weeping like a child and asking for me. When I met him, I found him in such a terrible state of collapse that he could hardly relate his woes. Tea was sent for, but he did not touch anything, and with the greatest difficulty we persuaded him to drink some water. Slowly, when he had calmed down, he told us harrowing tales of what had happened in the Ferozepur district. He said that he had come in by a circuitous route and had, by the grace of God, reached Lahore, somehow. Over 70,000 Muslims, including his family with two young grown-up daughters, were taking refuge on a small island between the canals, Sikhs from Faridkot State were practically surrounding them, and they might all be massacred any moment. He said that he would rather see his family dead than have his daughters fall into the hands of the ferocious Sikhs. The tales received from different places were that they were killing the elder members of the families and taking the girls away. He was sobbing and beseeching me to save the honour of his family. For two days I tried to pull every string possible, but without any success. Shafqat Rasul was frantic and practically going mad with grief. On the third day, I decided to seek the help of Brigadier Muhammad Ayub Khan, who was Second-in-

Command of the Boundary Force, a joint command appointed by the Boundary Commission to look after the interests of the communities on both sides of the border, as caravans were frequently being attacked in transit and had to be helped across. I rang up Ayub asking him to come to my house, and when he arrived Chaudhri Shafqat Rasul explained everything to him. Ayub thought over it a while and then said that the only help he could give was to send Shafqat Rasul in one of their weapon-carrier cars, and he advised me to send a letter to the British Brigadier incharge of the force in Ferozepur. When he gave me the name, I was glad to find that I knew him well and had come into contact with him during my work in the Defence Council. Shafqat was sent that very evening with an escort to Ferozepur and my letter to the Brigadier. Ayub was very helpful and sent a whole regiment of soldiers with Shafqat Rasul to the spot. They arrived just in time, when the main attack of Faridkot Sikhs had started and the lives of all the innocent besieged Muslims were saved.

Soon after my return from Karachi, Tazi started running a fever and had to leave for Murree under doctor's orders. I learnt that a refugee camp had been set up at Walton, about seven miles from Lahore, and I rushed to see it. I found that Nawabzada Ata Muhammad Khan Leghari, a senior CSP officer, had been placed in charge of it. He was very glad to see me and asked me for all the help that I could possibly give him in organizing the work and in looking after the women and children. Neither my sister nor Fatima Begum, President and Vice-President of the Muslim League Women's Committee, or Begum Tassaduq Hussain, the Secretary, were in Lahore, so I called a meeting of the Women's Committee myself. Within a week, a number of women's sub-committees for collecting food, clothes and money, and for providing organized help had started working. A corps of workers with badges was organized and hours of work allocated to the different sections. Rana Liaquat Ali Khan arrived in Lahore on 17 September, and a meeting of women was called by Miss Maqueen, the Governor's niece, at Government House. I learnt there that Begum Tassaduq Hussain

had been nominated to represent Pakistan at the United Nations Assembly in New York. Miss Maqueen had suggested in her speech that a number of women's committees for relief work should be set up, and when I told her and Rana Liaquat Ali about the sub-committees that had been organized and were already working, they were rather surprised. At my suggestion, it was decided that a large meeting of women be held at Government House and a Women's Voluntary Service, on the lines of the British Women's Voluntary Service, should be organized. Rana was anxious that Tazi should take charge of it and a telegram was sent to Murree to ask her to return to Lahore. Tazi organized the voluntary service of women, which did inestimable good in the next few months. We asked Rana to get us a central building where an office could be set up and the house of Rai Bahadur Ram Saran Das at 11 Egerton Road was selected for the purpose. The keys were handed over to me and I asked a *tehsildar* to accompany us and have it opened.

When I entered the house, I found that it was full of very costly articles of furniture, paintings, carpets, safes, and other things. I had most of the expensive things packed and stored away in locked rooms and had them and the safes sealed. While we went home to have lunch, one of my clerks, whom I had stationed at the house, came rushing to inform me that the clerks of the revenue officers concerned had brought a truck and were filling it with valuables and taking them away. Tazi rushed to the spot with a cousin and they gave these people a piece of their mind, and stopped them from moving anything. Locks worth sixty rupees were purchased and the things carried into the house; even refrigerators and heavy things were moved and then locked in, and the place was sealed. About two or three months later, when Mr Gopal Das, son of Rai Bahadur Ram Saran Das, came to Lahore to fetch his movable property and I helped him to have the things packed, a number of refugee women belonging to high families of the East Punjab, who were working in the office of the Pakistan Women's Voluntary Service, came to see me and tried to stop me from doing it. They said that their houses in Jullundur, Ludhiana and

elsewhere, full of costly things, had been looted and they had lost everything. Why should Hindu refugees be allowed to take their things away? I replied that it was our duty to show them what honesty and integrity meant, and that old and valued associations had not been broken in spite of Partition. When Mr Gopal Das learned how their things had been taken care of he came to thank us personally.

Refugee women and children were suffering a great deal in camps, especially the orphan children, and we decided to put them in a spacious evacuee building. I contacted the Minister in charge and asked him to give us the Ganga Ram Girls School building, situated on Jail Road. He told me that the building had been reserved by the Education Department and advised me to ask them to lend it to us for the time being. The Secretary of Education agreed, the Department concerned gave the keys to me to have the building opened, and an Indian Christian magistrate was asked to accompany me. The rooms were opened, and before handing it over to the lady-in-charge I asked the magistrate to prepare two lists of all the furniture and other things, one to be given to the Superintendent and one to be kept by him. Sitting down to write, he asked me what he should put down in the list. I asked him what he meant by it; a list of everything in the building was to be prepared. He smiled and said that I was only the second person he had come across out of all those he had to deal with who had told him to write down everything in a list of this type.

Rana Liaquat Ali and I were working together in the organization of such things as the work in the camps. The Pakistan Women's Voluntary Service were doing excellent work and I was told by the officers in charge of certain sections of the camp that when persons died and cholera was suspected, it was the women volunteers who would unhesitatingly lift the dead bodies when men refused to do so. Lahore public was wonderfully kind and whenever an appeal for food was made on the radio, regardless of the time of the day, shopkeepers, housewives and others would immediately send to the camps whatever they possibly could. This was apart from the food

which was pouring into the camps regularly every day. One day, when Rana and I went there late in the evening and our car drove through three rows of dead bodies on each side of the road, we found that thousands of people were without food, as the train carrying fuel had not arrived from Changamanga. It was nearly half past nine and even a radio appeal could not have got us the amount of cooked food required to feed thousands of refugees. We did not know what to do, and on my return home, just as I was getting out of the car, I fainted. It was impossible to forget the little faces of the hungry children and the cries of young people clamouring for food. Rana called the Punjab Cabinet and she gave them hell. Liaquat Ali Khan used to relate how, on his return after an important Cabinet meeting at 11 p.m., he found the Punjab Ministers sitting wordless while Rana scolded them like little children.

The women volunteers had lifted over twenty little babies from the rows of dead bodies where their mothers lay. To get the refugees out of trains full of blood; women out of the carriages without shoes or even *dopattas* (scarfs) and often with hardly any clothes on, crying for those gone or left behind; to see so many orphaned girls and boys—all this was indeed most painful. I advised Rana Liaquat Ali to organize a Women's National Guard, which she did, and the first meeting was held at my house.

A number of people I came across suddenly started talking against Brigadier Ayub Khan, the Muslim representative on the Boundary Force, and attributing to him the wrong policies that were resulting in bloodshed and suffering for the Muslim refugees. I was upset, because we knew how much Ayub had been doing to lessen the hardships suffered by Muslims and how he had been helping destitute Muslims in the trains and by the wayside. A number of my own relations had been brought to Lahore from Simla, from the refugee camp in the Delhi Fort and from Batala by the Boundary Force, in trains and trucks under their protection, and most of them were full of the kind help given to them by Brigadier Ayub and his officers. I tried to probe the matter and, to my surprise, I found that some unwise

Punjab officials, whom the public had approached, had been saying that these policies were being framed by the British General in command of the Boundary Force and Hindu Generals, with the help and advice of Brigadier Ayub. Tazi and I contradicted such rumours and presented the real facts to the representatives of the public. When we talked to Brigadier Ayub Khan about it, he told us what his difficulties were and said that he would like Mr Jinnah to know about them. I rang up Jinnah and while I was talking to him he wanted to know what Brigadier Ayub's advice would be: when I told him that he was there with me, Jinnah said that he would like to talk to him. Brigadier Ayub told him that the Boundary Force was not serving the purpose for which it had been organized and he advised him that it should be dissolved and they could take care of the work on the Pakistan side of the border. Mr Jinnah looked into the matter and the Force was dissolved.

I received a letter from the Chief Minister, Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot, asking me to take charge of the work of bringing refugee girls from the East Punjab. I wrote a reply the very next day, saying that it would not be possible for me to do so because of my legislative work in both the assemblies, especially of the Constituent Assembly. The letter was despatched and delivered, and the peon book was signed by his secretary. After twenty-eight days, Mr Biscoe, Divisional Superintendent of the NWR, came to see me and told me that the Nawab of Mamdot had complained to him about my not having sent a reply to such an important letter and that was why the work for bringing the abducted girls to Pakistan had been delayed. I looked at him in surprise, called my clerk and showed him the peon book. On ringing up the Chief Minister, I learned that the letter had been lying all that time with his secretary, Wali Muhammad. Fatima Begum was asked to take charge of the work which had been pending because of the secretary's mistake.

In October, trouble started in Kashmir, an overwhelmingly Muslim majority state that wanted to opt for Pakistan and should have been a part of Pakistan, but which was being forced to

become a part of India by its Hindu ruler. Suddenly we learnt that the Maharaja had openly declared his decision to join India. The basis of partition had been that the Hindu majority areas and states were to join India and the Muslim majority areas were to be part of Pakistan, and this had been accepted by the Indian National Congress. For the ruler of an overwhelmingly Muslim majority state to declare his choice without consulting the people of the state could not be tolerated. Trouble had started and persons from the Frontier Province and tribesmen from the transborder areas, learning of the Dogra tyranny, began to pour into Srinagar in support of the liberation movement. My son-in-law, Brigadier Akbar Khan, was in charge of the Pakistan forces in Murree and my elder daughter, Tazi, joined her sister, Nasim, there. A large number of refugees started coming over the border of Kashmir and both my daughters, especially Tazi, helped to organize a great deal of relief work for them. In one part of Kashmir, which now forms Azad Kashmir and is a part of Poonch and Kashmir States, Kashmiris had started fighting in resistance of the Dogra suppression, and the Muslims there asked Akbar to help them, even single-handed. Akbar did his best to keep the Indian army at bay with only fifteen soldiers until slowly an Azad Kashmir force was organized. Throughout those six months, Akbar's strategy, his military skill in command of different battalions of tribesmen, and his taking of key positions were highly praised. Fighting was going on between the Indian forces and the people of Azad Kashmir and the people of Pakistan could not bear to remain silent spectators when their Muslim brethren were being butchered and turned out of their homes.

I felt that we women of Pakistan, instead of securing offices, should first work to get our economic independence and should ask for the implementation of the Muslim Personal Law of Shariat in the Punjab at once. Women had played a great part in the winning of freedom and the creation of Pakistan and I knew that the Government could not refuse any reasonable demand of this type. A request was made and the Mamdot Ministry agreed to present a bill to the Assembly for enacting the Shariat Bill in

the Budget Session of 1948. A Select Committee of the House was appointed which sat immediately and its report was placed before the Assembly. Just as it was to be passed, it was suddenly taken out of the agenda. We women members of the Punjab Assembly were furious and told the Muslim League Women's Committee and other women workers to strive with us to get it through the House. My mother, Lady Shafi; Fatima Begum; and my sister, Geti Ara, marched on to the Assembly with thousands of women, and the police, while trying to stop them, became harsh. The women would not turn back; they squatted on the steps of the Assembly building and raised slogans until the Chief Minister, the Nawab of Mamdot, came out of the Assembly, apologized for police harshness and promised to look into the matter. I went straight to Nawabzada and Begum Liaquat Ali Khan and explained everything to them and the Mamdot Ministry had to pass the bill immediately. Women secured their full rights of inheritance as wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters under the Muslim Personal Law of Shariat of 1948.

Mr Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy was restive and disappointed and Liaquat Ali Khan decided to ask him to join the Central Cabinet as Defence Minister, but he refused.

A couple of months after Partition, Mr Jinnah convened a meeting of the Muslim League Council in Karachi. A few days before the meeting, I had a long talk with him about the office of the President of the Muslim League and of the Leader of the Assembly Party being one and the same. He agreed with me that these two offices had to be combined and the Leader of the Cabinet should become the President of the national organization, otherwise there would always be conflicts between them. Either the President would have to become a stooge of the Prime Minister, and in the provinces of the Chief Ministers, or there would be such fights between them that the Government or the organization would suffer and lose its independence. For day-to-day working, a separate Chairman of the Working Committee could be appointed, so that the heavy responsibilities of the prime ministership or chief ministership should not stand in the way of keeping the national organization alive, active,

and in touch with the common man. A meeting of the Muslim League Council was held and after a full discussion, in which some of us pleaded for the combination of the two offices, as was the case in most successfully-run democratic governments; the majority disagreed with the proposal. Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman was elected for the re-organization of the All-India Muslim League into an All-Pakistan Muslim League. I could see that Mr Jinnah had not liked the decision of keeping the offices separate, but he had left it to the League Council to decide.

During one of the Muslim League Party meetings we talked of the change of name of the Muslim League so that the doors of this national political organization should be opened to every community of Pakistan. One or two names like the Pakistan National league were also suggested.

I had talked to Mr Jinnah about West Pakistan being turned into One Unit so that provincial jealousies should come to an end and the best available talent be used unitedly for a well-run administration of the unit. I had given a number of other reasons as well and he replied that the idea was good but it was not feasible for the time being. I talked to Liaquat Ali Khan about the creation of a One Unit Government in the West, like East Pakistan, but he said that, however good the idea might be, the provincial leaders in power would not agree to it. I replied that, after all, many of them had not liked the idea of Pakistan, yet it had been achieved and One Unit in the West could also be brought into existence similarly.

Mr Clark Getts, head of a well-known touring agency, who had arranged tours for Winston Churchill and Vijaya Lakshmi Pundit, wrote to me in October 1947, asking me to visit America on a lecture tour and explain all about Pakistan to the American citizens. He said that the American people were anxious to know why the subcontinent had been divided and Pakistan created. He had written in the letter that they would arrange an extensive tour and would pay $25,000. Mr Jinnah was in Karachi, so I showed the letter to Liaquat Ali Khan, who was in Lahore. He advised me to accept the invitation, which I did. When Jinnah

came to Lahore, I placed the letter before him and asked for his kind advice and permission. He told me to go by all means if I wanted to and he would not stand in my way, but if I wanted a friend's advice, his reply would be to stick to my work as a legislator and not to swerve from the path that I had been following and fritter away my energy on outside activities. Then he told me how many times people had tried to divert him from the road that he had chosen for himself, but he had stuck to his guns and consistently refused to turn his attention to other channels, and that was why his efforts had been crowned with success. He further said that his advice would be not to undertake the tour, but devote myself to a legislator's good work. I told Mr Jinnah that I would not accept the invitation and cabled my refusal to Mr Clark Getts.

On 1 January 1948, I married a relation, Chief Conservator of Forests, Mian Mushtaq Ahmad. He had been educated at Oxford and was very fond of my children. It was mutually agreed that I should retain my earlier name.

The massacres of lacs of persons, the genocide, the influx of nearly two lac refugees, the setting up of new administration, especially in East Bengal, and the position of those who had been left behind in India, upset Mr Jinnah so much that his health started deteriorating rapidly and the nation was being slowly deprived of his outstanding leadership, wisdom, and sound judgement. This happened at a time when a combination of vision, initiative, and hard work were required to nourish a young state like Pakistan and help it to grow up along the right lines. The refugee problem alone demanded colossal effort and exceptional talent. Over and above all this came the important Kashmir question, as the very existence of Pakistan depended on securing that overwhelmingly Muslim majority area, without which the state was incomplete. Faced with such heavy burdens in failing health, Jinnah continued to work and in spite of it all by February 1948, a surplus budget was presented to the Constituent Assembly, much to everybody's surprise.

I had my last meal with Mr Jinnah in March 1948, during the Budget Session of the Constituent Assembly: the Nawab of

Mamdot, Mumtaz Daultana and Shaukat Hayat, with their wives and two or three other Punjabi members of the Assembly, had been asked to lunch at the Governor-General's house. I had been placed on Mr Jinnah's right and he was in a happy mood. In November 1947, I had found him upset and depressed because of the massacres and the influx of lacs of refugees, and I was happy that the depression had gone. When I asked him about the reappointment of the women's committees, he replied that such questions would be tackled when, within six months, the reorganization was completed, and the Muslim League placed on an appropriately sound footing. I had a most satisfactory talk with him and we discussed the question of Pakistani culture, dress, and way of life; it was an unforgettable conversation. If only he had lived to put his ideas into action!

While talking, I said to Mr Jinnah that the capital of Pakistan should have been Lahore, and not Karachi. I was giving reasons when he said that Sindh was the only province which had invited him to locate the capital in Karachi. Shaukat Hayat at once said: 'We invite you now,' but Mr Jinnah replied that it was too late. I thought of the time when I had suggested to the Chief Minister to send an invitation to Mr Jinnah, asking him to make Lahore the capital, and his reply had been: 'Let the old man remain where he is.'

Jinnah grew very pensive and he went on to tell us about his arrival in Karachi and what happened after it. He had found that there were only twenty crore rupees in the State Treasury and outstanding bills of thirty-two crore, bare offices, and everything had to be started from scratch. In seven and a half months, the position had changed and a surplus Budget had been presented to the Assembly. He said that those who used to say that Pakistan could not be a viable State had better take note of all this.

It is to the credit of the Mamdot Ministry that, in spite of a number of errors in the settlement of refugees, which should have been district and family wise, over forty-two lac refugees were settled within a short time. Most families had been allotted six and a half acres of land which they could call their very own.

Fighting in Kashmir was on, and Tazi learnt of a convent full of nuns and children being surrounded near Baramula, now in occupied Kashmir. Frantic requests for help had been received, but it was very difficult to enter the territory when Indian planes were strafing all around and Indian soldiers were standing on the ground underneath, and none dared to go there. In spite of Brigadier Akbar Khan's repeated advice not to risk her life, Tazi insisted on going in a plane and rescuing the entire community of trapped nuns. She told me that when the plane was still in the air and was being shot at while coming down, she had prayed hard that nothing should happen to her, as her mother would not be able to survive if she was killed. Her attempt, however, succeeded and she brought out the nuns successfully without a single scratch, although several shots passed near her very ears. The nuns presented her with a handmade leather bag, saying that with every stitch they had prayed for Tazi. She asked me to keep it very carefully.

For some time Tazi had been writing a book tracing the socio-political changes in the subcontinent from 1932 to 1942 in the form of a novel, and on my advice she decided to pay a visit to America, spend some time touring there with her brother and have her book published there. Her idea was to write a sequel to the book of the developments from 1942 onwards. Ahmad was finishing his studies and Tazi and he planned to travel in the States in his car. Tazi was also thinking of delivering a few lectures on Pakistan at various places. Nawabzada and Begum Liaquat Ali were in Lahore when she was about to leave. One evening she said to Rana Liaquat Ali that the men had put the men of Pakistan on the map, but she was going to America to do the same for the women. When Tazi decided to undertake the trip, she suggested that Begum G.A. Khan, who had worked in the Women's Auxiliary Corps during the War, should be asked to take her place as Director Women's Voluntary Service, and I agreed. We both advised Begum Liaquat Ali accordingly and she took over from Tazi. Tazi left for Karachi just a week before she was to fly to New York. At a number of dinner parties which she attended in

Karachi, when she gave first-hand information of what had happened in Kashmir, even the American Ambassador said to her: 'Why have we not been told about this? Miss Shah Nawaz, go to America, go soon, and tell them all this.' Sir Zafrullah, the Foreign Minister, was heading the delegation to the United Nations Organization and Mr Hassan Ispahani was the Pakistani Ambassador at that time. They both told me that Sir Zafrullah did not prepare his speech for that day until Tazi arrived and gave them first-hand information. In fact, she had decided to leave about one month earlier than originally planned in order to be present during the Security Council Session, where the Kashmir question was to be discussed.

She left Karachi early on the morning of 14 April 1948, and the plane crashed in flames on the night of 15th at Shannon, Ireland: there was only one survivor, a gentleman who was to disembark at Shannon. Later I learnt that she had not been at all well throughout the journey to London and the air hostess had advised her to stop in London and take the later plane, but she had replied that her brother had come all the way from Boston to New York, and he would be terribly disappointed if she did not reach New York on the appointed date. She was meeting him for the first time in nearly four years and was keenly awaiting the moment of reunion with Ahmad, whom she loved like her own child. Tazi was gone, and in her I lost not only a brilliant daughter but my best friend and companion in the world.

In the last few years of her life, she had taken charge of everything. She almost mothered me, leaving me free to carry on my social and political activities without any worries of home and property. Such ripe judgement and so much wisdom at that young age were seldom known; even elders of my family would come to consult her about their difficulties. The world seemed to have come to an end, for a part of me was gone, and yet one had to continue as before the hardest and the most difficult task in life; to go on as if nothing had happened, when the world seemed to have crumbled under your very feet.

Her last words to me were:

I will return home when Kashmir becomes a part of Pakistan. I wish to build a hut there and settle in it. Please, mother, remember the new State must be a progressive Muslim State and you must never forget to work for it.

4

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND DEMOCRACY

As I had always been interested in the framing of the constitution, I began working earnestly in the Constituent Assembly, in which I was a member of four committees: the Fundamental Rights Committee, the Basic Principles Committee, the Franchise Committee, and the Nationality Committee.

I spent the summer, after my sad bereavement, with my daughter Nasim, who was in Upper Topa, a few miles from Murree, and we often visited the Kashmir war front. Fatima Begum and some women members of the Muslim League Women's Committee came and stayed with us and we took two maunds of sweets to the front lines when the Three Foxes (peaks) were conquered by my son-in-law, Akbar Khan. While I was there, my grandson, Nadir Khan, was born on 12 August 1948.

On 12 September the sad news of Mr Jinnah passing away was received. What a tremendous blow to the nation! We were all overwhelmed with grief. So the dream had come true; Tazi was the first to leave this world and Jinnah followed five months after her. Jinnah's severe illness and his demise bereft the nation of the architect of Pakistan, in the most crucial period of the country's formative life, and people realized very soon that they had indeed been orphaned.

My son, Ahmad Shah Nawaz, returned from America after taking his degree and doctorate in Chemical Engineering in November 1948.

Rana Liaquat Ali decided to form an All-Pakistan Women's Association. I had been advising her to set up an organization on the lines of the All-India Women's Conference and I was glad that such an association was being brought into existence. She asked me to frame a constitution for it and I tried to make it as wide as possible. I was elected Senior Vice-President of the Association, with Rana Liaquat Ali as the President.

My elder brother, Mian Muhamamd Rafi, died and I had to return home for a couple of days during the Budget Session of the Constituent Assembly in January 1949. I had received the news of his serious illness when the Nationality Committee was to meet. I had a talk with the Law Minister, Pirzada Abdus Sattar, and he agreed to allow Shaista Ikramullah to attend the meetings in my place. When I spoke to Shaista about it, she said that as she did not know anything about the history of the question, she would not like to attend it. I met the Minister again and explained the whole question to him. I emphasized the fact that it was unjust that, whereas men had the privilege of choosing their nationality in case they married women of other countries, women were forced to accept the nationality ordained by the law of that country, which was different everywhere. I told him that we had waited upon the Human Rights Committee of the League of Nations as a world women's deputation and that women had been fighting for equality with men in the nationality laws. Islam was the first religion in the world that had recognized equality in civic rights for both men and women, the word used being *musawaat*, therefore the basic principle must be accepted. He agreed with me and assured me that he would see to it that the Committee accepted it, and asked me to explain it to the Secretary of the Committee as well. Equality of right to choose nationality was accepted both for men and women and legislation enacted on the basis.

Early in 1949, I learnt that there was a proposal by the Government to acquire three-fourths of the land in the Thal area of Muzaffargarh and Mianwali Districts, in the contour of the new Thal Canal which had almost been completed. These overwhelmingly Muslim majority districts had been thirsting

for irrigation for nearly eighty years The project had been prepared at the end of the nineteenth century and was about to be started in 1902 and again in 1917, but had been placed in cold storage because the Hindus did not want the Muslim majority districts to flourish, and other canals in Hindu majority areas had been given preference over it. Thal Canal had been sanctioned during Sikandar Hayat's régime and was to be completed by 1943. The War intervened, the work was stopped and was resumed after the cessation of hostilities. At last the canal was almost finished in 1949, but before it was opened, came the bombshell that three-fourths of the land of all proprietors would be acquired by the Government, basing this on an Act passed when the canal was to be built in 1902. The government had then passed a Sindh Sagar Doab Act with the owners' consent that the British Government would acquire three-fourths of the land of the proprietors in that area. As no canal had been built, and every time it was shelved and other projects given preference over it, that Act was repealed in 1929. Was it just to revive it after giving them no water for so many years? Such Muslim majority areas had at last got irrigation after waiting for it for decades, and the first Act of an Islamic State was to take away their privately owned lands for nominal compensation after they had proved true Muslim Leaguers in the fight for Pakistan. One of the British officials, giving reasons for not supporting the sanctioning of this canal, had said in his note that these areas were the preserves for recruitment to the Army and once the lands were irrigated, it would be lost to the Army. Now, at last, when their turn was coming, most of the land was to go. When the proposal was placed before the Punjab Assembly, I said on the floor of the House that we strongly objected to such discrimination, that when these districts had been paying for all the irrigation works of the Province, they should be treated in this manner when at last it was their turn to get water for their lands. As one of the proprietors in that area, I volunteered to give all the land without any compensation if it was acquired similarly from everyone in the whole Province, and not only in the Thal area. The Government said that it was

being taken away for the settlement of refugees. The Revenue Minister said in the Assembly that the Government was beginning such acquisition with the Thal Canal area and that in all future irrigation projects the rule would be followed by taking away three-fourths of the land, and his speech is on record. A number of projects like the Ghulam Muhammad Barrage, Taunsa Barrage and others were completed later, but not one inch of land belonging to the proprietors of those areas was taken away. In one of the areas of Leiah Tehsil, the compensation paid was Rs. 11/4/0 per acre and the highest fixed anywhere, even near a town, was Rs. 36 per acre. Although it had been put down in the Act itself, the land was never given to the refugees at a low price and the Government began selling it at Rs. 1000 per acre and more. The people refused to let the Government take charge of the land, and in the Mianwali District, when a number of persons resisted acquisition, there were two casualties. I went to Leiah personally and in the presence of the Chairman, Thal Development Authority, with the greatest difficulty and after long discussions, I made the representatives of the district agree to giving up the land without any resistance. Had the Government taken that area under the Land Reforms Scheme, they would have had to pay bonds of lacs of rupees to the people. All the amenities promised at that time remained mere dreams and people would often come to see me and complain of their suffereings. Why it was done at that time, and for the Thal area only, no one has been able to understand to this day. It only meant delay in bringing land under cultivation, and considering that areas elsewhere were rapidly getting waterlogged and there was a tremendous increase in the population, it was not wise to let the land about to be irrigated remain fallow for years while water flowed down to the sea. Machinery for all the paraphernalia of acquisition, assessing compensation and settling details related to it, just did not exist soon after Partition, and even today the accounts have not been finalized and a great deal of land remains fallow.

We were in Karachi for meetings when I learnt that a Board of Ulema had been set up for consultations about an Islamic

constitution and suddenly, as members of the Basic Principles Committee, we received a so-called Objectives Resolution which was to be proposed in the Committee. Just before I had left Lahore, a deputation of our foremost *ulema*, headed by Maulana Ghulam Murshid, had met me and they had impressed upon me the necessity of framing an Islamic constitution. The day they came to see me and told me why they had come, I said to them:

> Maulana Sahiban, I am very happy that I had the opportunity of talking to you personally about this all-important question before the nation. I have received your telegrams and postcards, and often wondered why money was being wasted on them when hungry refugees could be fed with that amount. Would you be so kind as to tell me what an Islamic constitution is? As far as I am concerned, a constitution means a building where the chosen representatives of the people sit to legislate according to the Islamic laws enjoined by our religion. I respect the basic Muslim idea that these representatives should be selected by all the adults of the nation and directly or indirectly be appointed by nobody. That is the real concept of Islamic democracy that I have learnt since my childhood, and naturally I consider it my duty to try and have the principle of every adult member of the nation, irrespective of caste, colour, creed, and sex, having a voice in such elections, accepted by the Constituent Assembly. If that is done, the type of building for the seating and the day-to-day working of such representatives becomes immaterial. It may be *Masjid-i-Nabavi*, the Mosque of the Prophet (PBUH), with a date-palm matting, but taking into account the level of literacy, political considerations for stability and modern ways of life and thought, it can be a double-storeyed building. Whatever type of building it may be, it will be the chosen representatives of the people, whether it is you or I, who sit there to frame laws according to Quranic injunctions.

This was the gist of my talk and I was happy to find that they went back fully satisfied.

While I had the Objectives Resolution in my hand, I thought of my long talk with Mr Jinnah about the new constitution. Constitutional lawyers in the Cabinet had advised Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan to have preambles of this type, with

constitutional guarantees for every word, something sacred and precious, and one had to think twice before putting down such things in black and white. Did not the phrase 'an Islamic State' include all this and much more? I was perturbed and upset and went to see the Prime Minister. I told him of my talk with Mr Jinnah about the constitution and asked him whether he had any access to the papers left behind by Mr Jinnah or not. If so, it would be the greatest national service to have a copy of the constitution on which, Jinnah told me, he had been working for fifteen months. He replied: 'Begum Shah Nawaz, you know that I have never had any access to Quaid's [Jinnah] papers'. I saw Miss Fatima Jinnah the very next day, told her of my whole talk with her brother and requested her to let the nation have a copy of the constitution framed by him, if such a document existed in his papers I appealed to her that mistakes were bound to be committed in the new constitution if Jinnah's ideas were not placed before the Constituent Assembly, but she did not reply. She was a reserved person, but under the cold exterior there was plenty of warmth. I used to open my heart to her many times after Jinnah's demise and she was always kind and ready to listen to what I had to tell her. But she was not prepared to face the Government or take up cudgels on any important issue, until towards the end of her life.

A Board of Ulema was appointed to advise the Constituent Assembly. This, when Jinnah had said that there was no room for the *maulvis* in the Muslim League, a saying repeated by Fatima Jinnah in her talks. A board of the best constitutional lawyers of the country, yes, but not of the *ulema*. People said that Liaquat had no base, therefore he was trying to ally himself with the orthodox section and with the vested interests in the country.

We received the Objectives Resolution and I was very upset. How could the Court interpret and adjudicate a resolution of this type, was something beyond one's comprehension. Who had advised Prime Minister Liaquat Ali to have a preamble of this type? I could not understand how constitutional lawyers like Zafrullah and Nishtar had agreed to it or helped to frame it.

To base a constitution on such a resolution when every word would have to be legislated was something unthinkable.

Ghulam Muhammad, the Finance Minister, convened a meeting of the members of the Basic Principles Committee and seventeen of us, including Firoz Khan Noon and Mumtaz Daultana, met and discussed the question at length. It was unanimously decided to oppose it. The next morning Chaudhri Nazir Ahmad and Dr Malik, members of the Assembly, came to see me and advised me not to oppose the Resolution. I said that I had to do it, as I believed conscientiously that it should not be passed and it was also going against Jinnah's ideas. They told me that Liaquat wanted it to be passed, but I refused. When the meeting was held, imagine my surprise that I was the only one opposing it, while all the others just kept quiet. I looked at Firoz and Mumtaz, who had been so strongly against it. I had to face Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani alone. I pointed out that such objectives were our ideals and would remain so, but these should not and could not form a preamble to the Constitution. When legislation was framed, how would the courts interpret the working and act upon it? I threw light on every aspect of the question, and fought tooth and nail against it. What made me most depressed was that those who were the loudest in opposing it in the private meeting called by Ghulam Muhammad should keep dumb. If this was going to be the case in framing the constitution, God help our nation. I was fighting a battle in the interests of my nation and mine was the only dissenting voice recorded. Some of the leaders, while noisily voicing their sentiments at dinner parties, social gatherings, and private meetings, did not have the courage to say anything about them in the meetings of the Basic Principles Committee; their lips were sealed. I returned from one of the meetings in sheer disgust. Where were the leaders that I had worked with, personalities who knew how to give the lead in the interests of the nation, even if they did have to stand alone? Did leadership mean only to be the yes-men and henchmen of those in power? I was happy to find that Bengal had greater political consciousness and courage than the majority of members from the West.

Whether in connection with the discretionary powers of the Head of the State, or about other unhealthy provisions, when I explained the pros and cons of the points under discussion and succeeded in convincing them, they would side with me in getting the matter settled in the best interests of the nation.

In the Franchise Committee of the Round Table Conference, I had proposed that if adult suffrage was not possible, we should take advantage of the experience of those who had been voting for local self-government and make them the electorate for the future legislatures by lowering the property qualifications. It was more or less accepted and an educational qualification was added to it. An adult suffrage had already been decided upon and elections for the new Legislative Assembly of the Punjab had taken place on that basis. Shaista Ikramullah and I asked for 10 per cent of the seats to be reserved for women in all the legislatures, both Central and Provincial for two elections only. We argued that asking for a special privilege meant cutting at the root of equality, which was the principle for which women had been fighting, but as the majority of Muslim men were not used to seeing women working side by side with them, women were asking for reservation for a limited period only. Most of the members were of the opinion that, adult suffrage having been accepted, women had an almost equal voting strength and there was no need for reservation of seats for them. With the greatest difficulty we made them agree to 3 per cent reservation for women in all the legislatures, Central as well as Provincial.

A meeting of the Basic Principles Committee was taking place in Karachi which, unfortunately, I could not attend because of ill-health. The meeting was held and a copy of the proceedings arrived while I was still lying in bed. I went through it and was very much upset to find that the Committee had agreed to the suggestion that the President and the Governors were to be given discretionary powers to call upon any one in the legislature, whom they thought had the majority behind him, to form a Ministry. That the first principle of a democratic constitution should be trampled underfoot made me feel depressed. I rang up Mumtaz Daultana immediately and had a

long talk with him, explaining to him why the phrase 'in his discretion' had been coined by the framers of the 1935 Constitution. This power had been given exclusively to the heads of states for the preservation of the rights and interests of minorities only, and could not be exercised for any other purpose. The phrase 'in his discretion' meant absolute power given to the head of a state, and it should never have been accepted by the Committee in connection with the President or the Governors I explained to Mumtaz that an absolute power of this type given to the head of a state meant cutting at the very roots of democracy. A democratic set-up to be based on certain rules and principles, of which one of the most important was that it should be made incumbent on the head of the state to call upon the elected leaders of the largest party in the legislature, however small their majority might be, to form the Ministry. I told him, even then, that it would lead to a mess in the legislatures, for the wrong man asked to form the Ministry, with the powers of a Chief Minister, would within the six months at his disposal leave no stone unturned to create an unhealthy majority, and a deplorable state of affairs would ensue. Moreover, power of this type meant the killing of provincial autonomy, because the Governors would be the President's nominees and the Chief Ministers appointed by such heads of states, in their discretion, would be stooges of the persons in power. Mumtaz agreed with me and promised to help me to have it set right at the next meeting. I had the question reopened, carried all the Chief Ministers with me, and the clause was scratched.

A Zakat Committee was appointed by the Finance Minister, Ghulam Muhammad, and I was placed on it. Most of the outstanding *ulema* had been nominated as members and I learnt that some of them objected to the inclusion of a woman and were refusing to sit down to work with one. The Board of Ulema said that women should not be allowed to enter the Assembly, but if they were to be members, they should be above the age of fifty and should sit with a *burqa* on. In the meeting of the Basic Principles Committee, with Sardar Abdur

Rab Nishtar in the Chair, I objected to these remarks very strongly and pointed out that Islam recognized equality in civic rights for both men and women. I requested that the remarks of the Board should be expunged from the proceedings. Khwaja Shahabuddin did not agree with me. I told the Committee that I had listened to a lecture on *Diniyat* (religion) at the Al-Azhar University and the Islam interpreted by them was something quite different from what our *maulvis* were preaching. I requested the Committee that if some *ulema* were to be consulted, these should be asked to come from the Al-Azhar University, as Maulana Asad had been advising us, and they should not be the ones we had in the country. Only learned authorities should have the power to pronounce judgements on important religious matters of this type, and women could not be kept out of the Assemblies otherwise. I pointed out that the Constituent Assembly proceedings would be studied by future generations and such remarks should not be recorded. In this Sardar Nishtar gave me his full support, and after a tough battle in the meeting, it was decided to expunge the remarks from the Assembly records. Ghulam Muhammad was adamant about the *maulvis*' attitude and he said that either they worked with a woman on the Committee or they quit, and he would nominate some others in their place. The result was that, one by one, all of them came to attend the meetings and we worked together for nearly two years. Malik Khuda Bakhsh, President of the Committee, and Khalifa Abdul Hakim, the Secretary, both Arabic scholars and well-versed in Muslim jurisprudence, guided the deliberations of the Committee wisely. Malik Khuda Bakhsh rendered inestimable service to Islam by having a resolution passed unanimously by the Committee, without a single dissenting voice from *ulema* representing every school of thought, declaring that the door of *ijtehad* (decision by discussion) was still open and could not be closed. Unfortunately, Malik Khuda Bakhsh died of heart failure during one of the meetings of the Committee held at Lahore, which was a great loss for the nation. Khalifa Abdul Hakim was appointed President in his place. After two years of deliberations,

when the Committee had finished its work, I turned to some of the eminent *maulanas* the day we signed the Report, and said: 'So you have worked with a woman member of the Committee: I hope you did not find it irksome.' Maulana Muhammad Shafi replied that if women were to work as I had done, they would have no objection to sitting and working with them. In fact, the *Ulema-i-Din* had been very kind in accepting most of my suggestions for setting up institutions and in allocating special funds to lessen women's sufferings and their cooperation had been valuable in my work to improve the lot of women.

I was placed on the House Committee of the Central Assembly. Throughout the period that I was on it, I spared no efforts to make the President and the Secretary stand up and fight for the real independence of the House and tolerate no encroachment. I gave them my wholehearted support and secured the help of other members whenever necessary, in order to keep up the independence and the prestige of the House and have it as a completely independent body run by its own staff. I fought for the tenure of office, higher pay, and at least provincial service status for the senior reporters of the Assembly, who in my opinion were very hardworked. The President, Tamizuddin Khan, agreed with me and we all worked in complete accord.

I tried to impress upon the Prime Minister and other Ministers the urgent necessity for setting up a well-organized, well-knit Information Department, more or less on the lines of the department that had been set up during the War. I voiced my sentiments with regard to this all-important question in the Central as well as in the Provincial Assembly. I pointed out that Nazi Germany used to spend over forty crores per year on a department of this type and USSR was spending nearly eighty crores of rupees every year. Now that sovereignty was to be transferred to the people, it was the sacred duty of the State to convey the right type of information to them in order to make them responsible citizens of the nation, who would value and appreciate the importance of the franchise which they would be enjoying. The department that I was envisaging was not to be only a propaganda machinery, but was to be the means of

conveying reliable information and helping the people to become enlightened citizens of a free nation. What did a vote mean, and what would be the result if it was exercised wrongly? They must know that it lay in their own hands to elect honest, sincere, and hardworking people, who would devote themselves to the service of the country and work to improve the lot of the common man. The officers of such a department were to be asked to organize the spread of information in such a manner that, through publicity of every type—vocal, visual, written, and by songs, as was the case during the war—men and women should begin to understand their obligations and would no longer, through sheer ignorance, be a prey to irresponsible trouble-mongers. The whole atmosphere of homes, families, and society should undergo a complete change and people become not only politically conscious but good citizens as well. What I wanted to see was an upsurge created amongst the people of Pakistan and every man, woman, and child made to realize that it was essential that they should become true Muslims to justify the sacrifices that had been made. Such a department could inculcate a spirit of concord, of Islamic brotherhood of the *muhajir* and *ansar* type, Islamic simplicity and Islamic ways of social life, shedding all customs adopted from the Hindus and so foreign to Islamic civilization and traditions. Even in economics and in framing budgets, I suggested a bias towards the Islamic ways of administrative financing that I had always staunchly believed in. Perhaps these would prove to be the panacea of many of the evils existing in the ideologies of the world of today. The nation was still imbued with the spirit of selfless work and sacrifice, and had it been utilized at the right time and turned into channels of constructive work for development, for strengthening their love for Pakistan and for the protection of national assets as their very own, the country would have been saved from many a catastrophe. Unfortunately, my voice was a solitary one and the setting up of a department of this type remained a mere dream.

During the Budget Session, I drew the attention of the government to the antediluvian ways of administration whereby

a file which in an emergency required immediate attention might take months and often years to be dealt with, by which time the crisis was over. I suggested the overhauling of the whole administration and the introduction of more modern ways of day-to-day working. A Select Committee was appointed by the Assembly and I was asked to serve on it. Within one year I resigned in disgust, as the Select Committee had been turned into an ordinary retrenchment committee and the original idea had been thrown overboard. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali asked me to withdraw my resignation and assured me that my object would be kept in view, by the Committee, in its future work. The work was taken in hand and a number of good reports were printed. An Establishment Officer was asked to come over from London, although I considered the British ways of administration out of date, but he gave good advice. Unfortunately, most of the Committee's recommendations were never implemented.

I had been placed on the Finance Select Committee and I managed to have the Foreign Service opened to women, but within a short time it was closed again because one young woman had misbehaved abroad. I protested strongly against this being done on the ground of one unfortunate incident.

Mr Fazlur Rahman, the Education Minister, appointed a Central Board of Education, to formulate proposals for a new curriculum and to consider the question of the rarefication of the educational system in Pakistan, and he placed me on it. I spoke to him about it, pointing out that a large number of reports on education already existed. The Anderson, the Sergeant, the Abbott and Wood, the Punjab Syllabus Committee, and the Central Women's Committee's Report had compiled a great deal of information and I felt that a small Committee of educational experts should be appointed and asked to report within six months. The reorientation of education was urgently required, in fact it had been pending for a very long time, the educational systems were antedated and there should not be any further unnecessary delay in this important work. The Central Board of Education came into existence, meetings were held all over the country with lavish entertainment, pictures appeared in

the papers and the members worked hard, but the results—where are they? Still one hears of more meetings and more committees working. I said to the Education Adviser one day that I had first sat with him on a Committee in 1937, and I was still waiting to see even the report of that one committee implemented in his or my lifetime.

I received a telegram from Rana Liaquat Ali, asking me to accompany her and the Prime Minister on their visit to Moscow. I accepted, and was asked to get ready to leave at once. Nothing happened for over two months and when I went to Karachi to attend a meeting of one of the committees, I met Ghulam Muhammad and he asked why Liaquat had accepted an invitation from Moscow. I replied, why not? He went on to say that we were tied to the apron-strings of the Anglo-American bloc and we would not get away from them. Our very guns had to be supplied with ammunition from these sources. I replied that India was in a similar position, yet they could afford to follow a policy of neutrality, whereas we, by our strange and unwise policy in foreign affairs, were alienating those very neighbours who were practically sitting on our borders. Where was the need to show such close relationship with any Powers? Why could we not take a leaf out of Jawahar Lal Nehru's book and remain friends with everybody equally, without showing special preference for any one of the big Powers? In the Constituent Assembly, during the debates on foreign policy, I used to emphasize the necessity of following a neutral course and not allying ourselves with any bloc whatsoever. Moreover, I pointed out that friendship with the neighbouring Powers was essential for our very existence. In the world, the two systems were at loggerheads with each other and our ideology, for which we had made such tremendous sacrifices, believed in neither. We had a precious philosophy of our own, therefore it was all the more reason that we should take the best of both the ideologies, but he remained adamant and would not agree with me. I knew that had the Prime Minister not been influenced by some of his Cabinet colleagues, he would have been wise enough to follow the middle course of being friendly with everybody

and I deplored this weakness in him. The trip was never mentioned after that. We did not go to Moscow and very soon realized that the foreign policy was being framed by the pro-British and American elements in the Cabinet and the Secretariat, and Chaudhri Muhammad Ali, Ghulam Muhammad, and Chaudhri Zafrullah were mostly responsible for it. I know that it was one of the greatest mistakes committed in Pakistan's foreign policy at that crucial period, from which it was difficult to recover.

Once at a luncheon party in Lahore, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali said with a smile that whenever he was faced with a difficult file, he would ask his secretary to keep it pending, and within a couple of months it would find its own solution. I just looked at him and thought of what my elders used to say, that certain psychological moments demanded immediate decisions, for such moments never came again. A wrong decision could be put right, but protracted indecision meant trouble and might even bring chaos.

I found a great deal of frustration and discontent in the Defence Department and in the armed forces. The headquarters of the Army were too far away from the Central Government and some pressing decisions kept waiting meant trouble, whether on the borders or in the Army. The Prime Minister was much too busy to be able to tour around as much as was necessary with fighting taking place on the Kashmir front and with the after-Partition reorganization of the armed forces, especially the Army. The British Commander-in-Chiefs, with the background of work for the whole of the subcontinent, could not understand or realize the change in outlook required after Partition. My son-in-law Akbar Khan was fed up and other army officers also spoke to me during my stay in Rawalpindi and in Murree. I wrote to the Prime Minister about certain things and he agreed to see two or three officers quietly, but some matters were such that they could not be tackled in that manner. I was worried about how to move in the matter and help to improve things under the existing circumstances. If only a strong Defence

Minister, with headquarters in Rawalpindi, could have been appointed to handle the day-to-day difficulties that were arising!

There had been no meeting of the Franchise Committee for nearly thirteen months and meetings of the Basic Principles Committee were also being held at long intervals. Why all this delay? Various reasons used to be given which did not satisfy the members. I pointed out to Liaquat Ali about the Franchise Committee in one of the meetings of the Muslim League Assembly Party and he told Fazlur Rahman, the Chairman of the Franchise Committee, to call a meeting soon. The meeting was held within a month and, although only two clauses of the tentative report were left, he refused to finish the work, in spite of the repeated requests of the Chief Ministers of the Provinces. Shaista Ikramullah left Pakistan with her husband, who was appointed Ambassador to Canada and then High Commissioner in London, and I was left alone to carry on the work in the Assembly.

Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy severed his connection with the Constituent Assembly during the first session. I begged him not to do so, pointed out that Pakistan had been achieved by standing under one flag and for the future stabilization of the infant State of Pakistan, whatever the circumstances might be, the leaders had to remain united; such defections would mean weakening the national organization and the State. I felt depressed and knew that the dismemberment of the national party had begun.

Begum Muhammad Ali, wife of Maulana Muhammad Ali, a member of the Working Committee, had died and Chaudhri Khaliquzzaman included me in the new Working Committee of the Muslim League appointed by him. The work of the reorganization of the Muslim League was being delayed and, except for the occasional meetings of the Working Committee, whenever a decision from the national organization was required on any important or controversial issue, it was found that the actual work of reconstruction had not been taken in hand. A sub-committee was at last appointed to revise the Constitution and to suggest the changes required in it, and I was asked to serve on it. Mumtaz Daultana, Qazi Isa, and I worked on it

throughout the Assembly Session and our report was presented to the Organizer. The question of the reorganization of work amongst the women was dealt with at length and suitable provisions for it were incorporated in the Report.

The Muslim League Working Committee appointed a sub-committee to study the question of land reforms and suggest suitable measures. I was appointed one of the members and after the question had been discussed in detail we recommended that the land-holdings be reduced to 150 acres maximum. Mumtaz Daultana wrote the Report, which was very ably drafted and greatly appreciated.

In the Punjab, fights between the Nawab of Mamdot and Mumtaz Daultana had become an everyday occurrence, and the Punjab Muslim League Assembly Party was splitting up into factions. Mamdot could not carry on as the Chief Minister without the wholehearted cooperation of all. Mumtaz's outstanding ability, about which Jinnah in one of his talks had said to me that: 'Mumtaz was the only hope of the nation in future,' was recognized by all. Mumtaz felt that if his cooperation and hard work were needed to make the Ministry a real success, then he should have a free hand. His party had started feeling that if the successful working of the administration depended mostly on Mumtaz, then why should he not be appointed the Chief Minister? Open fights and talks of the change-over started, and even the Prime Minister asked Mumtaz to take over, but he kept on refusing for a long time.

The Punjab Muslim League Council meeting was held, Mumtaz was given full support to oust Mamdot, who had to resign from the Presidentship and Mumtaz's candidate, Mian Abdul Bari, was elected in his place. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar was the Governor of the Punjab at the time. Most of us felt that Mumtaz's taking over would improve things and when Mumtaz had almost secured the majority in the Muslim League Assembly Party and everybody was waiting for the change to take place during the Prime Minister's stay in Lahore, the Punjab Assembly was suddenly dissolved and Section 92-A was imposed on the Province. There was a dinner party at Mumtaz Daultana's house

and while I was getting dressed in the evening, one of my cousins came and knocked at my door to tell me that the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) had telephoned to say that the Punjab Assembly had been dissolved. This news came when we are expecting to hear that Mumtaz Daultana had been asked to form a Cabinet of his own and I was shocked and surprised. At the dinner party, I asked Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan whether what I had heard about the dissolution of the Punjab Assembly was true. He replied that it was so. I said immediately that whoever had advised him to take such an action was no friend of his or of the nation. He asked me why I thought so, and I answered that actions like these were not the solution to political problems. He did not like my criticism.

The majority of the Muslim League Assembly Party had helped Mumtaz to succeed in the League Council meeting and in the Party itself, and the news of dissolution was a great shock for all of them. It was clear that this action could not have been taken by the Prime Minister without Mumtaz's advice. Had he any right to give such advice to the Prime Minister over and above the heads of his supporters, and without previously consulting them about it? Strange, that after such success, when his Party was expecting the announcement of Mumtaz's Cabinet, they should hear the news of dissolution instead. How could responsible parties in power, with the running of administration in their own hands, work like this? The nation expected sound judgement and wise handling of intricate problems from able political figures, whoever they might be, as well as from persons at the helm of affairs. Dissolution meant re-election, very costly for the Province, uncertainty and, moveover, there was no earthly reason why the electorate should have been deprived of their representatives running the administration, when there was no national issue involved. Responsible houses of parliament could not be dissolved because of petty quarrels.

Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar asked Mian Abdul Bari, president of the Muslim League, to name advisers that he should appoint to help him carry on the administration of the Province. Mian Abdul Bari, without consulting any one, gave the names

of certain people who were not even known to the public. The administration suffered because of their utter lack of experience and there was discontent and frustration in all departments. The Governor, however able he might be, after appointing advisers, had to leave most things to them and could not personally supervise everything.

Mian Abdul Bari had secured the Presidentship of the Punjab Muslim League through Mumtaz's help, but after his appointment he tried to exercise a free hand and intrigues began. Squabbles went on from day to day within the Muslim League until Mian Abdul Bari was about to be defeated in the Punjab Muslim League Council. Just a couple of days before the meeting, Abdul Bari, who was related to me, came to see me and asked for my cooperation. He reminded me of our being brother and sister, having played together, and said that I should not hesitate to help him to sort out the mess. I smiled and said:

> Yes, brother, all that you have said is true, but the action you have taken today should have been taken soon after you took over as President, and, maybe, this sister of yours could have given some useful suggestions. Even if you did not consider me good enough for consultation, you could have asked Mian Abdul Rashid, Chief Justice of Pakistan, who is also related to you, to give advice. I am sure it would have been most useful to you, especially in choosing the right type of persons as advisers.

I went further and said that had he asked for my advice, I would have named so and so for such appointments and just think what the administration would then have been. Now it was too late. He acknowledged his mistake.

We sat in the meetings of the Basic Principles Committee throughout the summer. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar rendered untiring service to the nation, and the Report was finalized two years after the Committee's appointment. There had been protracted discussions in connection with the representation in the Central administration being fixed on population basis between the East and the West wings, and this had been the

main hurdle in finishing the work of every Committee. The West was opposing it while the East was insisting upon it. After the greatest difficulty and after making every effort, we were relieved when East Bengal at last agreed to the parity of the two wings. Fazlur Rahman helped a great deal in securing the consent of the members from East Bengal and we all felt happy that at last a solution to the problem had been found. Mian Iftikharuddin and Shaista Ikramullah were away spending their summer holidays in Europe; on their return, both of them condemned the Report. This Report was placed before the Muslim League Assembly Party of the Constituent Assembly and, in spite of the repeated warnings from many of us, it was decided by a majority to return the Report to the Basic Principles Committee. I felt upset and said to the Prime Minister that the turning down of the Report meant taking the nation into the wilderness, from which there would be no way out. Already, nearly two and a half years had passed and again we were being asked to start from scratch. If it was not to be this Report, what else would it be? It is my contention that had that Report been accepted there and then, the new Constitution finalized and drafted within the year, and elections held soon after that, Pakistan would not have had to face all that has happened since 1950.

The dissolution of the Assembly in the Punjab and the defeat of the Mamdot Party meant more trouble, and Mamdot and his supporters decided to break away from the Muslim League. I begged him not to resign from the Party, but he did not heed my advice. First Shaheed Suhrawardy and then Iftikhar Hussain of Mamdot, why these resignations? Should differences in the Party, without political issues of any national importance being involved, mean severance from it? About democracy of the Western type Jinnah had once asked me, in 1931: 'Begum Shah Nawaz, do you believe in the Western type of democracy for our country?' And I had replied: 'No, Mr Jinnah, I do not.' He had said that he did not believe in it either, but there was no escape from it, as the British had brought us up in that ideal for so many years. Democracy, based as it was on the rule of the

majority, be it a majority of one, could neither be worked nor be a success unless that basic golden rule was followed to the letter. An outstanding Labour member of Parliament, while talking to the whole Indian delegation in 1930, had told us that he differed completely from his parliamentary party on a certain question and had lost that morning by a vote of one only. He said that the next morning in the House of Commons, during the debate on that question, he was going to be one of the staunchest supporters of what the Party had decided against his opinion. He had explained this to make us realize what a democratic system of government meant. One resigned from parties only on grave national issues and not for personal reasons. When this happened in the majority of cases, persons resigned their seats as well, because of having been elected on party tickets. Mamdot formed another political party known as the Jinnah Awami League.

A couple of months after this defection, Mian Iftikharuddin and Shaukat Hayat differed from the Muslim League Parliamentary Party on certain questions relating to Civil Liberties and to the representation of Princely States, and delivered speeches in the Assembly to that effect. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali strongly resented this and they had to quit the Muslim League Assembly Party. I went and saw each one of them and talked to them, begging them not to weaken the national organization before the Constitution had been framed and party politics organized on an ideological basis. I appealed to them to remain within the League fold and try to influence its decisions towards what they thought was right. After all, did not some of them have differences even with Jinnah's policy on certain occasions and yet, by standing united then, Pakistan had been achieved, and if fighting for certain principles was necessary, it should be within the same framework, in order to improve it, and not out of it but mine remained a solitary voice.

The national organization, because of such defections, was getting weaker from day to day. The Muslim League, with its regular membership and annual sessions held in different places, and the Working Committee meetings held now and then, was

just not there. The Report of the sub-committee for revising the constitution of the League had been placed in cold storage and the League was no more a forceful organization of the type that had brought Pakistan into existence. For the successful working of a strong and efficient government, both at the Centre and in the Provinces, a combination of vision and hard work, administrative ability, tact, and outstanding leadership were required, and the nation was bereft of such personalities. Jinnah was gone and the people were feeling fatherless. If only he had lived to give Pakistan at least a stable Constitution! Many of those who were trying to fight, within the meetings of the different committees of the Constituent Assembly, against the unhealthy provisions being suggested, know that the end view of the majority of so-called leaders used to be how the suggested provision would affect them personally, and not what it would mean for the nation. With one hand a point would be conceded, and with the other it would be taken away by adding a rider or a proviso to the clause of the Constitution.

In one of the meetings, I flared up one day and told them for God's sake to be careful, to give the nation either the presidential system of government or a real democratic form based on essential principles of Western democracy. No state can possibly be run on a constitution made of '*chun chun ka murabba*', which means neither one nor the other. By all means, try to incorporate healthy provisions to make the system suit the conditions in the country, but not by giving up the principles which are the roots of such systems. The powerful nations of the world had made them what they were, through the day-to-day working of hundreds of years, and we could not improve upon the actual principles on which they were based. Both Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar and I agreed that the presidential system of government was more akin to the Islamic conception of a state or *khilafat*, but, as the pattern so far had been the British type of democracy, it had to be planned on the same lines in its final stages. Sir Robert Drayton, the able draftsman from England who had prepared a constitution for Ceylon within a couple of months and who had been engaged by the

government to draft one for Pakistan, said to me one day after a meeting of the Basic Principles Committee: 'You, who are fighting for healthy provisions, know my difficulties by now, of how to draft a constitution of the type that gives with one hand and takes away with the other.'

As long as the persons who had fought the battle for Pakistan were around the Prime Minister and he sought and depended upon their advice, things did not deteriorate so much, but slowly others of a different calibre had his ears. The *London Observer* wrote some time ago that six months before Liaquat Ali Khan's death, Pakistan had started going down the road. No, it was nearly eighteen months before his death that the committing of mistakes had begun. I had made it my duty to stay in the Assembly Hostel so that I should be in contact with the rest of my colleagues, especially the members from East Pakistan, and consultations could be held about the day-to-day work. A number of incidents had taken place one after the other which had depressed many of us, and one day Sardar Bahadur Khan, the Chief Whip of the Party, came to my room in sheer disgust and begged me to talk to Rana Liaquat Ali for the sake of my nation. The people who had then got the ear of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali, and whose advice was making him do things that were not in his interests or in those of the nation, would end up by taking his life as well. He was very apprehensive of this. I cannot forget those prophetic words of Sardar Bahadur Khan which came true within a few months.

A committee was appointed in the Punjab to frame the constituencies on the basis of adult suffrage and women asked for at least ten seats to be reserved for them. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, the Governor, was very sympathetic towards the question of women's rights and the women of Pakistan gained most of their rights because of his cooperation, whether in the Centre or in the Punjab. Five seats were reserved for women, of which one was to be for a refugee woman.

One afternoon in the Constituent Assembly session, I learnt that three Deputy Ministers were being appointed and my name was the first on the list which was about to be published. I was

dining with Liaquat alone that evening. When I reached the Prime Minister's house, I found Rana Liaquat Ali sitting all by herself, as the Cabinet meeting had not finished. Rana talked to me and asked me to accept the Deputy Ministership which Liaquat was going to offer to me. I said that just a few days before, Liaquat had appointed an Assistant Parliamentary Secretary of the Sikandar Hayat regime, Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani, as a fully-fledged Minister and I, who was one of the Parliamentary Secretaries, was being offered a Deputy Ministership. I told her that I was quite happy as I was, and for me to accept the Deputy Ministership was not possible; acceptance of an office of this type would indeed be a shock to many of my friends at home and abroad. She asked if I would like to go to Moscow as an Ambassador. I said that much as I would like to do so, it was not possible for me to leave the country when I was fighting such a hard battle to get women their rights under the new Constitution, and also because of a promise that I had given to my mother that I would not accept anything outside the country. Meanwhile, Liaquat had arrived and he listened to our talk. He suggested why not take Lady Shafi with me to Moscow, she would be such an asset to the Embassy? I said that I could not let my sex down until I had secured the Charter of Women's Rights for the women of Pakistan and get it passed by the Assembly. Moreover, I had tried to study things in the different foreign countries that I had visited and I wanted to help in the building up of Pakistan and in working for the general advancement of women within the country, which had been my life's work, and did not wish to go outside.

Muslim League tickets for elections to different Provincial Assemblies were being given to the stooges of the leaders in power. Fights among different leaders were taking place in East Bengal, Sindh, and the Frontier Province, more or less on the lines of the Punjab squabbles. Leaders everywhere were forming Ministries, composed only of their henchmen, irrespective of whether they knew anything about the departments or the subjects they had to handle. Inspector-Generals of Police were

being given responsible posts like the Presidentship of the Public Service Commission. If a person was a failure as a Minister, he would be nominated as a Governor or sent to the Central Ministry, or outside the country as an Ambassador. Unsuccessful persons seemed to have become the favourites of those in power.

In the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs there was a complete mess. The Minister in charge was acting on the policy of 'divide and rule'. I was on a visit to Murree and, after seeing the deplorable state of the warring sections, I thought it was my duty to bring the different parties together and after hard, uphill work, I succeeded in joining the hands of two important factions. When everything had been settled between them and we were all feeling happy about it, the Minister came to know of it and the settlement was wrecked overnight. When the leader of one section rang me up in the morning to tell me about it, I could not believe that it had happened.

The constitution-making was dragging on and we were still working after long intervals on different committees. Sir Zafrullah Khan and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar stood out as undoubtedly the best legal brains and constitutional lawyers. I have no hesitation in saying that the Report of the Fundamental Rights Committee, an excellent document and something to be proud of, is an improvement on the Indian basic rights.

The overriding powers given to the Finance Department during the War had not been taken away. When I had pointed this out from the very beginning in the Finance Select Committee to Finance Minister Ghulam Muhammad, he had asked me to keep quiet about it. He said that the Muslims were inclined to be extravagant and Pakistan was just beginning its new administration, therefore we had better not take away this check for one or two years to come, and I had agreed. My apprehensions, of too much delay in handling the files if this power remained with the Finance Department, proved true and I pointed this out in some of my Budget speeches in both the Assemblies. Moreover, I had always felt that unless the Minister in charge and the Secretaries handling the departmental work were not made responsible for running the administration

successfully, within the sum asked for by them and granted by the Assembly, efficient working of the administration would not be possible. When even a few days' delay could be fatal, they had to await the sanction of the Finance Department for little things for months and sometimes even longer, which was detrimental to the daily running of the administration.

With some Ministers like square pegs in round holes and such delays common, there was inevitable maladministration. I had always been of the opinion that the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers should not retain any departmental portfolios, but as heads of government they should get an overall picture of the whole administration and be able to devote their time to going through the important files of any department that were placed before them. Their outlook should be that of a final authority in matters of concern to the state, and their decision the last word on everything. Without any portfolios to handle, their time should be devoted to the improvement of the whole administration as such, keeping in contact with the people and promoting the interests of the national organization and the party they represented.

Both Fatima Begum and I were perturbed at a number of important questions, relating to the rights of women, which were being neglected by the Provincial as well as the Central Governments. The All-Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) Constitution had been considerably changed and, instead of making it a general women's organization with a membership fee of a few *annas* only, the annual subscription had been raised. All over the districts, wives of officials, made Presidents just for a year or two to help organize the Association, continued in office. Even in the Centre, with a Prime Minister's wife as President, it was not possible to fight the Government and secure for women their rightful place as equal citizens with men. After careful consideration, Fatima Begum and I decided to ask Fatima Jinnah to take the lead and become the President of an organization, for the protection of women's rights which had to be formed in Pakistan on the lines of the All-India Women's Conference. The two of us, with a number of outstanding women

workers, met her and requested her to take the lead in this all-important matter. We assured her that the organization would be run by all of us under her kind patronage and she would have no worry at all. We said that we had approached her, as we regarded her the mother of the nation, but she did not agree to do it.

Elections were called in the Punjab and the Central Board of the Muslim League sat in Lahore to finalize the tickets for the seats in the legislatures. There was a tussle for the five women's seats. Fatima Begum, the President of the Muslim League Women's Committee; Begum Tassaduq Hussain, the Secretary of the Committee; Begum G.A. Khan, a refugee from Ludhiana and Patiala, and Secretary of the Provincial Branch of APWA; and I made a pact that we would stand by each other. It was decided between us that Begum Tassaduq Hussain should stand from her old seat in the city of Lahore, Fatima Begum was to contest the women's seats in Rawalpindi, as her husband Raja Abdul Aziz's family and home were in that division, and, if necessary, she could even stand for the women's seat in Multan. Begum G.A. Khan and I should stand for the refugee and non-refugee women's combined seats in the Lahore Corporation area and outside the city. Mian Mumtaz Daultana, the Leader of the Muslim League Party, was informed of this pact and he gave us his blessing. Later on, we learnt that Begum Fida Hasan, wife of the Chief Secretary, was also thinking of standing. I welcomed the idea, as I was anxious that a second line of well-educated young women be formed and trained in the political field to take over from us in future. I had seen the mess that was being made in the men's sphere by raw, untrained politicians, many of them entering the Assembly with very little experience on District Boards and local Councils, soon after their success in elections securing ministerships and occupying leading positions. Most of the Members of Parliament had no idea whatsoever of the work of responsible houses of parliament and they were making a hash of things. Did the leaders of the Opposition know how to open debates on budgets and how to criticize, and along with that offer constructive alternative

proposals? Such houses were not public platforms for mud-slinging or speaking to the galleries. If that were to be the only work of a house of parliament, then why entail all the expenditure required to set up assemblies of this type, as plenty of platforms were available anywhere in the country for long-worded speeches full of beautiful phrases. Except for a handful of persons, the bulk of the entrants to parliament were completely ignorant of the work and were just teams of yes-men, his master's voices to be utilized for speeches whenever required. I said one day to a Leader of the Opposition:

> These Assembly debates are to be printed and will live in the archives of the Assemblies; for God's sake, think twice before you people speak. What will future generations say when they go through these debates? With the most important and burning questions of the day before us, we only know how to throw mud at each other, coin epithets in flowery language and with quotations of poems go on speaking in that strain. During a Budget debate, parliamentarians are not even touching the fringe of the questions under discussion, and should this continue to be the case?

The Muslim League Central and Punjab Provincial Boards had a joint meeting in Lahore and the Prime Minister called me while they were deliberating. He did his best to persuade me to accept the nomination of Sarwari Irfanullah for the refugee seat reserved with the seat that I was contesting. She came from a family who had been good friends of ours and I had nothing against her. I said to Liaquat Ali, that in the interests of the future of the nation, we should try and select well-educated young women, who know English well, and Begum G.A. Khan ought to be selected. Liaquat told me that the high officials, including the police in Lahore, were of the opinion that Begum Tassaduq Hussain stood no chance of success against Baji Rashida Latif in the women's seat reserved for the city of Lahore. Baji had served the Lahore people for a number of years and was very popular. He said that his information was that only Fatima Begum could win that seat for the Muslim League. Baji was standing on the Jinnah Awami League ticket

and belonged to the Mamdot party. I told him that Fatima Begum was refusing to stand against Baji, as all their lives they had been very good friends, and I informed him of our pact as well. After a good deal of discussion, he accepted Begum G.A. Khan's nomination and he asked me to see Fatima Begum immediately and persuade her to stand from the Lahore city seat. I was to give her Liaquat's message that the seat would be lost to the Muslim League if she did not contest it. He also said that the Rawalpindi seat might be given to Zeenat Fida Hasan. I returned home, sent my car to fetch Fatima Begum, and while she and I were talking, Mumtaz arrived and the three of us discussed the pros and cons of everything. Finally, it was agreed that Begum Tassaduq should be given the ticket to the City seat and Fatima Begum should be helped to go abroad to one of the Muslim countries as an Ambassador or Secretary. An Arabic scholar, well-versed in oriental languages, she would do well in any Muslim country, preferably Egypt, where she knew a number of people.

The election campaign was on and Khadija Khan and I had been working practically day and night for about two months. The area in which we had to canvass was a large one, with over 80,000 women voters. Whereas the men had a number of seats in the same area and their constituencies were small and compact, our two combined seats were spread over a vast area from Jia Musa to the Lahore Mint. Mamdot and the Jinnah Awami League were fighting to defeat the Muslim League in Lahore. Mian Abdul Bari was the President of the Muslim League at the time and Daultana was the Leader of the Assembly Party. Miss Ferozuddin, the retired Deputy Directress of Public Instruction and a very able lady, was made to stand against me and Begum Abad Ahmad, daughter-in-law of Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, wife of a Deputy Inspector-General of Police, stood for the refugee seat against Begum G.A. Khan.

I had been elected from the Lahore seat twice before to the Punjab Assembly and every time my opponents had lost their securities. My tribesmen predominated in the area and my family's villages were situated in the constituency. In most of

the houses that I visited to secure votes, I received the same answer: 'Our vote is yours, but do not press for the second vote; that will go to Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad's daughter-in-law,' and it used to take some time to persuade them to give all their votes to the League candidates. My own cousin, practically the elder of the family, for whom I had the greatest of respect and esteem, said the same thing and it took me one hour to persuade him to help Khadija Khan against the wife of his old friend, Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan. The villages of my family were told to give all their votes to Khadija Khan and in my own village I had seven more votes polled for her than for myself. She and I had together roamed all over the constituency, which included seventy-two villages, and wherever we went we asked people to vote for the Muslim League, the national organization that had secured Pakistan for them. We had decided to complete the house-to-house campaign just a week before the election, so that we could have some rest and also organize the work of the polling stations. Whereas the Lahore city seat was to have polling on only one day, for our combined seats there was to be polling on four consecutive days and on each of these days there were not less than twenty-four polling stations, or even more. On the last day of our meetings, I was feeling relieved that at last the rushing about was going to be over. Khadija Begum and I had addressed three meetings in the suburbs of Lahore, everywhere canvassing for the national organization, as the women were not only to vote for us but also for the thirteen men's seats in the whole area. I received a message from home to return immediately as some disquieting news had been received.

I rushed back and learnt that a telephone message had come from Rawalpindi informing me that my son-in-law, General Akbar Khan, and my daughter, Nasim Jahan, had been arrested overnight and sent to an unknown destination. My stepson, Mian Riaz Ahmad, Conservator of Forests in the Rawalpindi Division, had telephoned to ask what to do with the two little children left behind with the nurse. I was flabbergasted and could not understand what had happened, as only two months before

Akbar had been appointed Chief of General Staff and he was a favourite of the Commander-in-Chief, Muhammad Ayub Khan. Both the Prime Minister and the Defence Secretary, Mr Iskandar Mirza, were always full of praise for Akbar's work. In fact, on his appointment, Akbar had said to me that he wished that he had not been placed over the heads of some of the senior Generals, as such appointments created jealousies and put up the backs of good friends. With this background, I could not understand what these arrests meant, as I was completely ignorant of everything. Believing, as I had always done throughout my life, in constructive work and abhorring intrigue, I could not for a single minute realize why this had happened to Nasim and Akbar. Two children, a girl and a boy, one aged four and the other two, had been left behind and I did not know what the fate of Nasim and Akbar would be. Strong rumours were being heard that they would be shot, as there had been some sort of a conspiracy to upset the Government.

On reaching home and learning the shocking news, I rang up Riaz and asked him to bring the children to Lahore, and sat dumbfounded on a sofa with my head on my arm. I kept on thinking of the Defence Secretary's talk about Akbar's service as Pakistan's representative on the different committees during the partition of the armed forces, Akbar's unrivalled work in connection with the Kashmir campaign, and how much the Prime Minister and others used to appreciate it all. What had suddenly happened to so upset things that the children were to be in imprisonment? I thought of Akbar's words to me on his return after taking a year's course in England. He had said that he was very apprehensive of Liaquat's life, and often used to think of what ought to be done to safeguard it as much as possible, as he was the only pilot that the nation had for the present. Then why all this? Another hurdle for me to cross and, may be, utterly alone. The question before me was, should I contest the seat or not? All that was being said against the household, in spite of the sincerity shown by my family in the service of the nation, the care that had to be taken of the two little children, and what would be the result of such an

imprisonment—would it be possible for me to face it all and still stand for election?

Sardar Muhammad Nawaz Khan of Kot, who was the Deputy Minister of Defence during the days of my children's imprisonment, told me one day that the Prime Minister, when he learnt of Akbar's subversive activities, had asked him to go to Rawalpindi and probe the matter. He went there and tried to find out all about it. On his return to Karachi, he told Liaquat that it was mere children's talk and nothing more. Sardar Muhammad Nawaz and I agreed that Liaquat should have called Akbar, explained everything to him, and should then have tried to find out the root cause of it all in order to set matters right. After all, Akbar and he had been very close to each other. Even Iskandar Mirza, who used to admire Akbar's work so much, could have done this. I know that this was how a statesman like Sikandar Hayat Khan would have dealt with the situation. Akbar was considered an invaluable asset to the Army, so why lose him?

Liaquat had said one day that his real unpaid Cabinet was the Muslim League Working Committee. If that was so, he ought to have trusted me and I should not have received the news as I did. Having given proofs of my loyalty and friendship at every step, this was not the treatment that should have been meted out to me. I thought of the day when Sikandar Hayat called me and told me that Tazi was making speeches in the labour areas of Amritsar and Lahore against the Government. My reply had been that I believed in Hazrat Umar's (RA) way of life and he was welcome to treat her as he thought best, for if she committed a blunder, she had to suffer for it and there would never be any reproach from me. What did he do but call her to this own house and talk to her for over an hour, and after that there was never any cause for complaint.

I decided not to stand and the news was published in the papers. Some of the leaders of the Muslim League came to see me and asked me not to withdraw my candidature, but I said 'no' to every one, as I had no strength left to continue to serve as wholeheartedly as I had always done. The Deputy

Commissioner of Lahore saw me with a message from Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, for whom I had always had tremendous respect, and he said to me that the Muslim League would lose every seat in the city of Lahore if I withdrew from the contest and the Mamdot party would win all the seats. Sheikh Manzur Qadir and his wife, who were just like my own brother and sister talked to me and Manzur said that if I wanted to save my children, it was my duty to stand and, in spite of all that was happening, show the world by winning the seat that the people's love for me and my family was as before. I pondered over it and decided to fight the elections.

Even against a very strong candidate like Miss Ferozuddin, and in spite of the Mamdot party spending a great deal of money and even some of the Muslim League volunteers shouting against my family, I was elected by a majority of over 4000 votes and the Muslim League won six seats in Lahore. Baji Rashida Latif defeated Begum Tassaduq Hussain by a small majority only, but she lost in the election petition lodged by Begum Tassaduq Hussain against her. A Miss Muhammad Ali was given the Muslim League ticket in Multan and she won the seat.

When Nasim's servants arrived in Lahore and they told me how harshly Nasim had been treated by the police at the time of her arrest, I was very upset. It was nine o'clock in the evening and I went straight to Government House. Syed Ghiasuddin, Secretary to the Governor, came out of the office and I told him that I had come to see the Governor. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar was working in the office and, on hearing my voice, he also came out of the room and asked me to come in. We sat down and I related to him what I had learnt about the treatment meted out to Nasim. I told the Governor that Nasim, because of the long associations of our family with the families of the Frontier Province, was not only like a niece to him but she had also married into a family of his Province, and it was his duty to safeguard her honour. If she was to be imprisoned, let her be locked up in a room in Government House, or anywhere with a good family. With tear-filled eyes, I requested him not to leave

my younger daughter in the hands of the police. He rang up Khan Qurban Ali Khan, the Inspector-General of Police, who assured the Governor that Nasim would be well taken care of and that I need not worry about it.

Soon after Mumtaz Daultana had taken over as Chief Minister, he came round to see me, and I advised him to put the windfall of five crore rupees given by the Central Government to good use for Education and Public Health. I emphasized that it should not be spent on school buildings. Such big sums of money could not be had often and this should be spent on initiating something worthwhile and very much needed, and he promised to do so. When a copy of the Budget was received, I was pained to find in it that the sum was to be spent on putting up 1200 buildings for schools. So the Permanent Secretaries remained the real rulers.

I met Liaquat and told him about my feelings when I received the news of my children's arrest and asked him to give them an opportunity to prove their innocence in a court of law, which he promised to do. He said:

> Begum Shah Nawaz, considering the old associations of our two families and my wife's and my friendship with your household, I have had to take this action with deep reluctance. The day I signed the appointment of General Ayub Khan as Commander-in-Chief, I said before everybody in my office that it was Ayub today, and five years hence Akbar would be the Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army. This is what I thought of Akbar's ability.

I replied: 'The day you said this, Akbar's future was finished, and I wish you had not done it.'

A special tribunal was appointed which sat in Hyderabad, Sindh, and lawyers had to be sent there and other arrangements made to fight the case. After two months I saw Nasim, when she was brought to the Lahore Female Jail, and I saw Akbar in the jail at Multan. The defence proved to be very costly. The work of the two Assemblies, Central and Provincial, the responsibility of the children, worries over home affairs and

various arrangements for the children's comfort and for the defence in Hyderabad itself, all proved very heavy burdens. What had pained me most was my complete ignorance of everything. If Akbar had done anything wrong and Nasim was also involved in it, Liaquat should have talked to me about it all. The so-called conspiracy, what was it? I had no inkling of any such activities, yet the rooms where I was living in Karachi were wired, CID officers and police were following me everywhere, and my belief in humanity was shattered.

I had friends all around, persons by whom I had stood through thick and thin, and here I was standing practically alone. With Ahmad working in Calcutta and Riaz transferred to East Bengal, I had to struggle all by myself. Can I ever forget one night in Karachi when my grandson, little Nadir, had severe earache and a high temperature and was shouting for his mummy, and I did not know where to turn? Every week, to have to visit the prisoners in Hyderabad and see to the lawyers' comforts and provide the relevant papers, what a life! Neither can I forget the affection shown to me by some of those, not belonging to high families, who brought news of the children when I was frantic with worry and gave much-needed assistance in lessening my anxiety and burdens. Such timely help is always remembered and treasured. After nearly two years of protracted arguments, Nasim was released as innocent, and Akbar was given twelve years of imprisonment. How, later, Akbar was released is a long story.

Chaudhry Muhammad Hussain Chattha, as Revenue Minister in Mumtaz's Cabinet, proposed that no one should retain more than two squares (fifty acres) of land for self-cultivation (*khud-kasht*). In the Party meeting, when the proposal was placed before us, I strongly opposed it and spoke at length. I pointed out that the agricultural economy of the Province should be based on some well-known and tried-out principles, and legislation in a haphazard manner should not be enacted. There were three economic systems of agriculture being practised in the world, cooperative collective farming, nationalization of land, and a mixed economy as practised in America. First of all,

we should decide which one of the systems we would like to have as the basis of our agricultural economy, and then devise ways and means of making it a success. Nationalization had not been much of a success in USSR, and even the Chinese had not taken to it completely. Personally, I was all for a mixed economy, which gave a chance to the individual, who has the means to introduce mechanization. A ceiling of maximum holdings was required and should be decided immediately, and I suggested that holdings should not be less than 500 acres, but my proposal was rejected.

In October 1951, I was lying in bed with fever when I learnt the news of Liaquat's assassination, which came as a great shock to me. To lose him at that critical juncture was indeed a tragedy.

When I met Rana in Karachi after Liaquat's death, she told me that just before leaving for Rawalpindi, the Prime Minister had told her that he would be making an important announcement, on our foreign policy, in his speech at the public meeting. Who knows whether this was responsible for his murder or not? Who after him? The Muslim League had lost the election in Bengal and had become weak everywhere. In the Punjab, Mumtaz Daultana as Chief Minister, with strong opposition from the Mamdot party and dissatisfied old Muslim Leaguers all around him, was not in a happy situation. Suddenly we learnt that Khwaja Nazimuddin had taken over as Prime Minister and Ghulam Muhammad had become the Governor-General. Most of us could not understand such overnight changes.

A national organization with a working committee was in existence, and an Assembly with a Muslim League Assembly Party in the majority was there, so why were meetings of neither of them convened, but important offices filled up by a handful of persons only? This disbursing of offices between themselves by certain persons, what did all this mean? Why did they not consult the Party members, at least in choosing a Leader? In fact, a regular election of a new leader could have been easily held in Karachi, and appointments made in a democratic manner. Most freedom-loving people were perturbed. Sardar Abdur Rab

Nishtar had been recalled from the Punjab and had taken charge of a ministership in the Central Cabinet. Without the seasoned advice and guidance of an able personality like Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, how could a young and inexperienced Chief Minister, however able he might be, handle the intricate situations and problems that were arising during the difficult time that the nation was passing through? Mr Chundrigar, who had been appointed Governor, did not know the Punjab at all. Mumtaz, as usual, had formed a Cabinet of his yes-men and had acted upon the policy which had become the rule of the day, that no person as able as the Chief Minister or Prime Minister, be included in a Cabinet.

Our apprehensions proved true and the political atmosphere in the Punjab became overclouded. A clash between the Ahrar and Qadianis brought trouble and riots started in a number of places, especially in Lahore. When a meeting was arranged at Government House, I suggested that the leaders and Minister should go into the city of Lahore and I volunteered to accompany them, but the Governor and the Ministry believed in sitting behind closed doors; the situation worsened and Khwaja Nazimuddin came to Lahore. I had gone to Leiah for business in connection with my lands when I received a telegram from my sister, asking me to return to Lahore at once. The Prime Minister had asked Mumtaz to quit, and Firoz Khan Noon had taken over as Chief Minister and was forming the Ministry. The same type of changes were made as before, without the Assembly Parties having any voice in such appointments. My heart was bleeding and it was not possible to see democracy being crushed to death and keep quiet, but one had to do it.

A cabinet was announced by Firoz with Nawab Muzaffar Ali Qizilbash as the Revenue Minister, Lahore was given a representative against whom the citizens had voiced slogans only seven years before, and he took over as Minister in a Muslim League Government! Firoz's appointment did make those feel relieved who had believed in his political ability and administrative experience, as he had held so many key positions and worked within the Government for so many years. Most of

his friends looked forward to a stable government run with wisdom, foresight, and skill. In the Assembly, Mumtaz had a solid bloc of over seventy members loyal to him. Statesmanship demanded that Firoz should win the confidence of those and other experienced elements in the House. Moreover, he should have listened to people who had stood by him through thick and thin, his loyal friends and supporters, who were his real backbone in the House. It was his duty, in his own interests, that, when at last he had the power in his hands, he should show such persons his appreciation of their loyalty to him, so that such ties should become stronger. Imagine their surprise when, within six months, blunder after blunder was being committed which not only made the Mumtaz group his sworn enemies but made his staunch supporters realize how wrong they had been in thinking him to be a statesman of outstanding calibre. He was losing his friends one by one and I felt it a great deal. Our two families had been just like relations and I looked upon him as a brother. When Chaudhri Azizuddin was asked to quit the secretaryship of the Assembly Party, I could not keep quiet. I went to see Firoz and I told him that I had come for a plain talk and asked him who his advisers were who were making him commit such mistakes? An enquiry against Mumtaz, the imprisonment of Chaudhri Muhammad Hussain Chattha, the dismissal of Chaudhri Azizuddin—why all this? Wisdom, statecraft, and political expediency required that, after taking over, he should have called Mumtaz and asked him to name, if not two, at least one member of his party in the Assembly to be included in Firoz's Cabinet. Chaudhri Muhammad Hussain had proved to be an industrious worker, a good lawyer and had been a successful Minister. The success of the Muslim League Conference at Lyallpur had proved beyond any doubt that Chaudhri Azizuddin was the influence in that area and he, as Chief Minister, had treated them in such a shabby manner. Firoz replied that he was bent upon finishing Mumtaz and he would succeed in doing it. I said that Mamdot and Mumtaz had both said the same things about each other. Such feelings, resulting in wrong policies, were wrecking the nation. In every province,

leaders were at loggerheads with each other, trying to wreck each other, instead of joining hands and each contributing whatever he could towards national development during the formative period of their nation's life. I requested Firoz as a sister to act like the elder we had always thought him to be withdraw the enquiry, for no useful purpose would be served by washing dirty linen in public, release Chattha, reinstate Azizuddin and secure the cooperation of the largest single group in the Assembly, but my advice was to no avail.

So far, for nearly thirty years, the women's sphere had been kept intact and party frictions and party factions had not been allowed to enter it. The elder ladies had set the example of unity within the ranks of women, irrespective of caste, colour, and creed, and we had followed in their footsteps. Unity was strength, and for women's rights and interests a united battle had to be fought in order to succeed. During the Sikandar Hayat regime the members would often remark: 'Look at the women members whenever anything relating to women is mentioned in the House, you see all of them from Muslim, Congress, Mahasabha and even Socialist benches, getting up and one after the other, supporting each other!' We were proud of such notable unity. Never in our lifetime had we tried to oust an elder and take her place, however old she might be, but we benefited by her experience, for we knew that in due course those places would be ours and we would be occupying them with the blessings of the elders. Imagine my surprise and disgust when I saw the poison of intrigue, party factions and the habit of cutting the ground under the feet of the others, entering the women's sphere. I was being ousted from places where I had been working in one capacity or another for years. It had been my policy to form at least two or three lines of workers to take over from us when we quitted. I would suggest books, hand over points, and try to help the new entrants in every possible manner.

One day, when a leading member of the Punjab Assembly asked me how old I was, I replied that I was nearing sixty. He said that I had better retire and let the young element take my place. My reply was that I would have no hesitation in doing so

if I felt sure that the young sisters could carry on the work in a sphere where they were still beginners. I said that I was trying to give them all the assistance that I could to learn the work. Then I repeated four political phrases, and told him to ask the women members sitting next to me to explain what these meant. He and a few others who were sitting with him said that even they did not know what these meant, let alone my women colleagues. I said it was no wonder, then, that responsible houses of parliament had been turned into public platforms. Politics was not learnt in schools and colleges, and degrees did not mean anything in the sphere of politics. Statesmanship was gained through experience and working with skilled people. I had prepared one—Tazi—to take my place, but she was no more, and now who could I hand over the work to with confidence, the work of achieving the rightful place for women in every walk of life and securing their rights as wives, mothers, and daughters, which had been my life's work? Independence, courage, and tact, and also fighting spirit, were required to improve the conditions of women. Women workers whom men could twist around their little fingers could not achieve success in that sphere.

Fatima Begum, my sister Geti Ara, and some other women workers would often quarrel with me and ask me to quit the element that wanted to give us a fight, but I refused to create rifts and show to the world that pitched battles were being fought by the women as well as amongst the men. A Mamdot and Mumtaz fight, a Firoz and Mumtaz fight, or a Khuhro and Pirzada fight; no, this would not be allowed to happen in the women's sphere. Let them get us out of everything; there was plenty of work to be done to help the poor and the needy, and I would never let individual interests kill national principles, which were dearer to me than life itself. I knew that success could be achieved, but would it be worth having if it meant giving up the golden principle of nation before self? Even when a very high official asked my sister why I was not prepared to fight for my rightful place in public life, and Geti was angry with me for not doing it, I stuck to my guns and said: 'Even

with my last breath, I will prevent the poison of disunity and open fights on platforms taking place amongst the women, so help me God!'

Ministers, both in the Central and Provincial Cabinets, were handling too many departments each and the Secretaries to the Government were also given too much work. I pointed out that in the Turkish Constitution it had been put down in writing that no Minister would be given the administration of more than two departments. Khwaja Nazimuddin remained the Prime Minister for nearly two years and the fights, intrigues and change of government in different provinces went from bad to worse. Unfortunately, the Governor-General and the Prime Minister came to loggerheads with each other and unity was dead. Again there was a change of Government overnight in the same coterie and Muhammad Ali Bogra, who was Pakistan's Ambassador in Canada, was appointed Prime Minister, both Iskandar Mirza, Defence Secretary, and Mr Gurmani became full-fledged Ministers, and Ghulam Muhammad remained the Governor-General.

We sat throughout the summer in meetings of the committees and of the Constituent Assembly, the framing of the Constitution was finished at last, and we all felt very much relieved. The *Dawn* representative in the Assembly very kindly wrote that he had never heard me open my lips 'but to make a useful contribution to the subject under discussion.' But both Mian Bashir Ahmad and I, who had been members of the Senate of the Punjab University for years, were ousted and others were given our places.

China sent an invitation to some of us women workers of Pakistan to take part in a World Conference of Women, arranged by the Democratic Women's Association of China in Peking, and to witness their First October Revolution Day celebrations. They were going to be exceptional that year, as the completion of China's first five-year plan was being celebrated. I was asked by the Prime Minister, Mr Bogra, to lead the women's delegation to China with six other ladies, including Begum Muhammad Ali (wife of the Finance Minister); Begum Hussain Malik

(daughter of the Governor-General); Begum Brohi (wife of the Law Minister), Dr Rahman, a scientist from East Bengal; and Begum Rashid.

The final meeting of the Constituent Assembly took place just the day before we left for China. Jubilant speeches were delivered and the Charter of Women's Rights, with 3 per cent reservation of seats for women, both in the Central and Provincial Assemblies, was passed unanimously by the House. I had asked for a Charter of Women's Rights to include:

1. Equality of status
2. Equal opportunities
3. Equal pay for equal work
4. For Muslim women, all the rights given to them by the Islamic Personal Law of Shariat.

Just before the meeting, I met the members of the Assembly belonging to the minority communities and the young Muslim members of the Committee and I discussed the Charter with them. I said that adult suffrage had been accepted and they had better be careful in voting on the rights of women, which were being discussed by the Committee the next day, for women would surely come to know who had advocated their cause and who had opposed it. I told them also that the Charter framed by me had the backing of all the women's organizations in the country. The next day, when I spoke about it in the Committee, while Sir Zafrullah was presiding and Nishtar was piloting the draft of the Report, the President said to me:

> Begum Sahiba, Islam recognizes equality in civic rights, and we gladly concede the right given by religion to our women, but for an infant state like Pakistan it is not possible to incorporate the rights asked for as justiciable fundamental rights.

I pointed out that if Islam had given such rights, they could not be denied to the women citizens of an Islamic State. Was there any difference in the Holy Quran between *jaza* and *saza*? Even

for the worst crime that a married man or a married woman could commit, both were to be put to death, and similarly in provisions for reward, punishment, and other provisions of different types, the words used were for both men and women. Sir Zafrullah said that even in Great Britain, Prime Minister Winston Churchill had refused to accept a bill for equal pay for equal work and had asked for a vote of confidence from the House. I replied that, as far as Great Britain was concerned, it had been one of the most conservative states with regard to the right of equality for women citizens and many of the rights accepted by other progressive countries were still denied to British women, therefore the citing of that example was no argument at all. After my speech, each one of the minority members spoke in support of me. Then the Muslim members went on in the same strain, one after the other. When it came to Sardar Bahadur Khan's turn, he supported the full Charter for Women's Rights. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar exclaimed: 'Even you are supporting it!' Sardar Bahadur let the cat out of the bag by saying that, in future, they had to face an equal number of women's electorate, and therefore he had to support it. The result was that both the President and Abdur Rab Nishtar yielded and the Charter for Women's Rights was passed unanimously. I returned to the hotel with tears of joy in my eyes.

The members were feeling happy that at last their onerous task had been finished and democracy would now have sway in Pakistan. Just before the last meeting, I rang up the Secretary of the Assembly, and learnt that an important bill divesting the President of all the powers that he had been enjoying as Governor-General was to be placed before the Assembly which was in session, and passed immediately. I learnt from a reliable source that Tamizuddin Khan, Khan Abdul Qaiyum, and Mr Gazder had arranged during their stay in Nairobi (where they had gone as a Parliamentary delegation to advise the Prime Minister) to do so on their return, and the result was the present bill, which was proposed and rushed through the House that very day, leaving us flabbergasted.

How could they have imagined that the President would take it lying down? True, he was a sick man, but, knowing him as we all did, we realized that the obvious result would be the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly.

All seven of us left for China at the end of September 1954, and we crossed from Hong Kong to Canton with a number of members of delegations from other countries, including the Australians. From Canton we were flown to Peking, as the Conference was starting in a day or two.

Madam Siu-Chang, President of the Chinese Democratic Women's Federation, had asked Fatima Jinnah, Rana Liaquat Ali, and myself by name to attend the Conference, but both of them had not been able to accept the invitation. As we got out of the plane, we were welcomed by a number of prominent Chinese ladies. Our Ambassador, General Raza, with his wife and whole staff was also at the airport. We were taken straight to a reception, which had been arranged in one of the big hotels of Peking, to meet delegates who had come from all over the world to attend the celebrations. The President, Mr Mao Tse-tung, the Prime Minister, Zhou Enlai, Madam Sun Yat-sen and all the other high officials and leaders were there. The members of our delegation were introduced to the Prime Minister. As we were the first delegation from Pakistan to visit China, people seemed to be interested. We met the members of the Indian delegation led by Mrs Swami Nathan, an old friend of mine, and Mrs Rajan Nehru was also a member. There were women delegations from twenty-two countries, but Great Britain and USA had not sent any. The reception was colourfully arranged and we met a number of interesting people.

Madam Siu-Chang entertained all the women delegates to lunch on behalf of the Association. Small tables had been laid in a big hall of the hotel, and at the President's table the leader of the West German delegation was placed on her right, and my seat was on her left. Mrs Swami Nathan was just about two seats away from me. The President made a very good extempore speech appealing for the unity of the women of the world, to safeguard their rights and interests and to take care of future

generations of children. The leader of the West German delegation spoke after her and then I did, more or less in the same strain. Meanwhile, Mrs Rajan Nehru, sitting at another table, had written a speech which she brought to Mrs Swami Nathan to read. I was very sorry to find that the question of Kashmir had been purposely and unnecessarily brought into it, talking about India spreading from Kashmir to Raskumari. We were naturally upset, but I kept quiet throughout the rest of the proceedings. In the evening, I took Mrs Swami Nathan aside and told her that if such vexed questions were brought into their speeches by the Indian delegates, we would have to reply, and I advised her to abstain from doing it in a world conference of this type. She apologized for the mistake and promised not to do so in future. I had also said to her that while in China we should not talk of the differences that unfortunately existed between our two countries.

The Independence Day celebrations were most interesting and picturesque, and the march past of every section of the people was gorgeous, and a great eye-opener for all of us. China was obviously progressing rapidly and was destined to become a great power. I was surprised to find that all over China there were so many outstanding personalities, both men and women, highly educated and well versed in statecraft.

I had been reading the famous book *Seven Years in Tibet*, just before I received the invitation from China. I saw the Dalai Lama sitting with the whole Cabinet, and his sister lunched at the table next to ours at the luncheon party of the Women's Conference.

India had sent a number of persons, including a cultural delegation composed of fifty-five members, which was headed by Pundit Nehru's own cousin.

An interview was arranged with Zhou Enlai for our delegation and we talked with him for three hours and twenty minutes. We covered a number of important points and talked of many a burning question of the day. He had a remarkable brain and such a marvellous grasp of pertinent matters that I did not have to repeat a single point twice. The Marquis of Lothian, Mr

Wendal Wilkie, and Zhou Enlai were the only three people that I had met with such quick perception, extraordinary understanding and unique ability. Without doubt, Zhou Enlai is one of the greatest personalities of the world of today.

When the Indian and the Pakistan delegations had tea with Madam Sun Yat-sen, popularly known as Madam Sun-Chin-Lee, Mrs Swami Nathan asked her why the women of China had put on the same type of costume, coats, and pants, as the men and given up their womanly dress. She replied: 'Madam, this is not for all times, and is meant only for the period of building up of the nation. When that is achieved of course they will go back to their own pretty costumes.' I told her that we members of the Pakistan delegation had been greatly impressed by the Chinese women's simplicity, hard work, power of speech, and their sense of duty. It had been such a joy and pleasure to find so many efficient and outstanding women leaders amongst them.

We, members of the Pakistan delegation, were welcomed everywhere and people were extraordinarily kind. The meetings of the Conference, as well as of the different committees, were interesting and informative. We learnt of the new marriage and divorce laws and I was glad to find that they were very much on the lines of the Islamic laws, including Conciliation Boards, as enjoined by Islam. We were taken around to see a number of old buildings, the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace, the tombs of the old kings, a temple and a mosque nearly 500 years old, and other interesting places. As China is one of the oldest civilizations, pictures of thousands of years opened up before our eyes. The personal rooms of the last Empress, who died in 1908 in the Summer Palace, were full of costly things of unique workmanship. We saw a number of nursery schools, welfare centres, old people's homes, industrial institutions, and schools and colleges. Everywhere, women were working in key positions, side by side with men.

After spending ten days in Peking, we were taken in a special train to different towns and cities, from the coal fields up in the north to Hen Choi in the south-west, on a tour lasting nearly

three weeks. The train was ferried across the Yangtze-Kiang river and it was a thrilling tour. We were shown practically every aspect of their life: newly-built labourers' homes, mills, factories, colleges, including technical institutions like an engineering college, and an old people's home. We went round a mechanized farm area in the country, talked to the farmers and saw their mode of living and working. In Nankin museum, a panorama of the governments of the last 2000 years could be seen just like a picture. The development of porcelain, brocade, architecture and other things belonging to the Chinese civilization were spread out there in various forms. In Shanghai, the Youth Palace organized by Madam Sun Yat-sen is a unique institution. Young people under fourteen years of age gave a show of Chinese dances and pageantry. Even the speeches delivered were by young children under fourteen and office-bearers of the same age were conducting everything. The children's library in that Palace had over 6000 books and the Chief Librarian in charge of it was a young boy under fourteen. There were 200 theatres in Shanghai. One well-known Chinese composer kept us spellbound until 1 a.m. with music more like the European music than our own.

One of the young girls attached to our delegation had her home in Shanghai. Our young members told her to take an evening off to go home and enjoy herself. She looked at them and replied that they had no time for frivolities, for they were building a nation. After the completion of our tour we were taken to Hanchow, a picturesque place very much like Kashmir, where we were made to rest for three days before returning home. Whichever city we visited, we were entertained profusely. Mayors' reception and banquets for women only, sight-seeing and studying things had kept us very busy.

I had opportunities of meeting a number of Chinese Muslim women holding key positions and talking to some of the Muslim men. All of them told me that the present regime was treating them far better than any previous government had done, and they asked me to convey this to the Government of Pakistan and to bear it in mind while deciding their foreign policy. The

old mosque that we had visited in Peking, where we met the *maulvi* (known as *akhund* in Chinese) had a nice library which was very well kept. The *akhund* told us that there were no restrictions whatsoever on saying prayers or celebrating religious festivals and the mosque used to overflow with Muslims for prayers on Eid days, and even on Fridays there were quite large gatherings. The Chinese are a very cultured and hospitable people and their way of life being Asiatic means that we have a great deal in common with them in everyday life.

On our return from China, we crossed the border from Canton to Hong Kong and entered the train, I read the newspapers lying on the table and learnt that Mr Ghulam Muhammad, the Governor-General, had dissolved the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. This, when the Constitution had been finished and was ready to be drafted. At this critical juncture in our nation's life to see a Constitution, finished after years of debates, sweat, labour and expense, going down the drain was indeed unbearable. What did the future hold? More years of roaming in the wilderness. Considering the situation I had left on my departure for China, this was no great surprise, but my disillusionment and grief were none the less for that.

The members of the Indian delegation were in the compartment next to ours, with a door between, and Begum Muhammad Ali, Begum Hussain Malik, and Begum Brohi were sitting next to me, but I did not discuss anything with anyone and did not see the members of the Indian delegation. On reaching the hotel, I went straight to my room feeling bitter disappointment over the plight of my nation.

5

THE PHILOSOPHIC MIND

After my return from China, I received an invitation to a Kashmir Conference which Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Bogra was to hold in Karachi. I proposed that the Government of Pakistan should sponsor an application of the Azad Kashmir Government for United Nations Organization membership, withdraw their forces from the cease-fire line and let the Azad Kashmir Government take care of its own borders. They could then do what they liked to achieve freedom from the Indian yoke for their brethren and the United Nations Organization be made responsible for it all. We had no right to prevent the Kashmiris crossing the cease-fire line, if they so desired, to help their kith and kin in Kashmir.

A Family Laws Commission was appointed and I was asked to serve on it. Under the able guidance of Mr Justice Abdul Rashid as Chairman and Khalifa Abdul Hakim as Secretary, both Arabic scholars, it produced a report within six months. The Commission's first recommendations were for separate Family Law courts with simple procedural laws so that women's cases could be decided within three months. Tunis and Egypt enacted legislation on the basis of provisions suggested in this Report, and Malaya adopted it *in toto*.

I decided to form a United Front of Women to protest against the provision in the new Constitution whereby equality of opportunity for all had been curtailed by a proviso that the Government would have the right to reserve any category of service for any one sex, and because of a number of other matters relating to women's rights. I requested all organizations to send one representative each, and except for All-Pakistan

Women's Association, all cooperated. A legal sub-committee was formed and when we asked eminent jurists and outstanding lawyers to become members they readily accepted. The organization and the committee worked for a year and a half before Martial Law was declared.

Mr Gurmani was appointed Governor of the Punjab and Mr Chundrigar joined the Centre. A Constituent Assembly was to be elected by the Provincial Assemblies and the Muslim League was to give the tickets. As soon as I learnt of this, I went to see Firoz Khan Noon, the Chief Minister of the Punjab, and asked him to advise me whether I should stand for election or not. Both, Begum Viqarunissa Noon and he told me that the Centre did not want me in the new Assembly, and that they were therefore helpless.

I saw Mr Gurmani, who promised to help me wholeheartedly and encouraged me to stand for election. I was reluctant to apply for a seat after my talk with Firoz. The application was ready, but even at ten o'clock on the last day I had not sent it. Chaudhri Muhammad Hussain Chattha rang me up and asked me whether I had applied or not, and I told him that I was still thinking about it. He said Mumtaz Daultana had asked him to tell me to send my application immediately, and he had promised to give his full support. Chattha insisted on my sending the application and went so far as to say that, if I did not do so, he would come round, take it from me and hand it over personally to the Assembly office. I sent the application and informed Mumtaz about it. I had, however, told all my women colleagues that I would be standing and they had given me their blessing. Chaudhri Muhammad Ali, Gurmani, and Firoz were to decide about the League tickets. A few days later, I saw in the papers one morning that Begum Zeenat Fida Hasan had been given the Muslim League ticket for a seat in the new Constituent Assembly. I was thunder struck, as it had been understood between us women legislators that only I would apply. I telephoned and asked Zeenat if it was true that she had sent an application for the new Assembly. She dilly-dallied in replying to my question and said that she would like to come round and

explain all about it. I told her that I wanted a straight reply to my question, and nothing more. She said that she had, as the elders wanted her to do so.

On an appeal from me to the Central Parliamentary Board, the Prime Minister, Mr Bogra, gave the ticket for election to me. Mr Bogra said some kind words about my work in the Assembly to the deputation of the Muslim League Women's Committee that had waited upon him, when he came to decide the appeals as Chairman of the Board.

On the day of the election, friends, one by one, came and told me who they had been asked to vote for. One kind friend, a tribesman, asked why he should vote for so-and-so, and not for his own tribal sister, who had served the nation so loyally. I advised him to do as ordered, and this went on until half past ten. We women members were all sitting together, awaiting our turn, and one was feeling restive and wanted to talk to me. The Assembly building was full of police officers and members of the police force. I thought of the days when not a single member of the police could enter the building except our own Assembly police. I went to talk to Syed Jamil Hussain Rizvi, who was sitting with some members of the Punjab Assembly, when suddenly a member from a district town said: 'We are voting for the *lathis* and not for human beings.' Meanwhile, the lady member quietly came over, as the other three had gone to have tea, and drew me aside. Then she told me that the instructions to all four of them were not to vote for me, but to cast their votes for somebody else. I thanked her for being a good friend, and went and told the Secretary that I had withdrawn my candidature.

All the others, including Iskandar Mirza, Jilanis, and Gardezis, had been elected, but Justice Din Muhammad, Syed Jamil Hussain Rizvi, and I were left out, and no woman was elected. If only the women members had cooperated, we would have won a seat in spite of the men's opposition.

Suddenly, the news arrived that yet another change had taken place in the Centre: Muhammad Ali Bogra had been sent to the United States as Ambassador, and Chaudhri Muhammad Ali

had taken over as Prime Minister. Firoz Khan Noon was included in the Central Cabinet and Dr Khan Sahib was nominated Chief Minister in the Punjab. The whole of West Pakistan was turned into One Unit and a tentative ministry composed of the ministers of the different provinces was formed. The Provincial Assemblies were to elect 310 members for a One Unit Legislature, and after elections a new representative ministry was to be set up. The Defence Secretary, Iskandar Mirza, had been placed in the same post in the Central Cabinet.

The West Pakistan One Unit Legislature was elected and I won the seat from Lahore. When it met for the first time in 1955, the members were handed copies of the new Constitutions of both the Central and One Unit Assemblies of West Pakistan. I glanced through them and knew at once why I had been kept out of the Central Assembly by every possible means. The unhealthy provisions that I had fought against tooth and nail in the Basic Principles Committee, not resting until these had been deleted, had been incorporated in the new Constitution framed and passed by the new Assembly. The most important provision, the very foundation stone of a democratic structure, that it should be made binding on any head of the state to call the elected leader of the largest party in any House of Parliament to form the Ministry, was not there. The President and the other heads of state had been given discretionary powers to call upon any person who, in their opinion, commanded a majority in the House to form the Cabinet.

Mumtaz Daultana had returned from Karachi and he convened a meeting of the Lahore group of members. He told us that the Prime Minister, Chaudhri Muhammad Ali, had made Dr Khan Sahib agree to remain an Independent and become the Leader of the Assembly Party and he had advised us, all Muslim Leaguers, to elect him, and Mumtaz had agreed to it. I complemented him on his wise decision, cited a similar incident in the British Parliament when Ramsay MacDonald was elected as Leader, although the Conservative Party was very strongly entrenched and had been elected with an overwhelming majority, giving a crushing defeat to the Labour Party. In spite of it, the

Conservative Party had elected Ramsay MacDonald because of the current situation in foreign affairs, on which he was considered an expert. I told him that I was delighted to learn that Dr Khan Sahib had agreed to such a proposal and said that we ought to be grateful to Chaudhri Muhammad Ali for making Dr Khan Sahib agree to do so. We discussed it and all the Lahore members accepted it. Just a few days before the election, we went to receive Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, President of the Muslim League, who had come to Lahore to preside over the meeting of the Party that was to elect the Leader. Chaudhri Muhammad Hussain Chattha came over and started admonishing me on our acceptance of Dr Khan Sahib's leadership of the Party. I was amazed, as talk of this type from him was very disturbing. Sardar Zafrullah joined us, but he now supported Chattha and said that Leaguers would never agree to such a proposal. We discussed the question for some time and I gave them both a piece of my mind. The next morning, before the meeting was to take place, I took Mumtaz aside and traced what I thought would happen if we elected a Muslim Leaguer that morning. I told him that I was surprised to learn that Sardar Bahadur Khan was being put up against Dr Khan Sahib's candidature, and that it was a grave mistake.

No one could understand that while Mumtaz was supporting Dr Khan Sahib, all his right-hand men, like Muhammad Hussain Chattha and Sardar Zafrullah, were strongly opposing him. Why was Sardar Bahadur, a great friend of Mumtaz, put up against Dr Khan Sahib? We could not understand all this. I warned him that if Dr Khan Sahib was not elected Leader of the Assembly Party, he would form another party in the Assembly which would be strengthened with all the Government forces at the command of the Cabinet, the Muslim League Assembly Party would be defeated, and there would be a chaos in the Province. He agreed with me, but said that the others were not ready to elect Dr Khan Sahib and Sardar Bahadur Khan was being put up for election. I talked to a number of members, but I did not succeed in bringing them round. I pointed out very strongly in the meeting that we ought to have been happy that Dr Khan

Sahib had agreed to remain an Independent and become the Leader of the Assembly Party. He was an old man and after his retirement, which would not be distant, a Muslim Leaguer could be elected. Mumtaz spoke after me in support of what I had said and made a strong plea for accepting Dr Khan Sahib's candidature, but we lost. People said that Dr Khan Sahib, who did not have more than thirty votes in favour of him, secured seventy because of my strong speech. Sardar Bahadur was elected Leader by 240 votes, but the Governor, Mr Gurmani, reappointed Dr Khan Sahib as Chief Minister.

Chaudhri Muhammad Ali resigned from the Prime Ministership and people said that one of the main reasons had been Dr Khan Sahib's defeat and the fact that Mumtaz, after giving his promise to Chaudhri Muhammad Ali, had had Sardar Bahadur elected as Leader of the Assembly Party. They said that Chaudhri Muhammad Ali had resigned in sheer disgust and many felt that he should not have done it, but should have faced the odds boldly.

Soon after the elections, a new party, named the Republican Party, was formed by Dr Khan Sahib and members started changing sides overnight. Every possible means was adopted to strengthen it and every word of my speech came true.

The One Unit Constitution instead of being centrifugal, had taken us back to 1886, and I spoke on it at length, pointing out that with one hand adult suffrage had been given, and with the other all power had been taken away. Why did they not link the sovereign people with the administration at every step? Advisory councils for Deputy Commissioners, Commissioners, and others should have been set up and small elected executive bodies should have been given to the District and Divisions, to make the people responsible citizens of a well-run state. The speech is on record.

Dr Khan Sahib, while forming the Ministry, had approached me and three of his ministers came to see me one after the other, to ask me to join his Party. Dr Khan Sahib called me to his house, and spoke to me about my cooperation. He said that I, as a sister should sit on the Treasury Benches with him.

I replied that my respect for him was always unchanged, but I wished he had talked to me before he formed a new party. Perhaps I could have given him some good advice. To organize a party with elements that had deserted the Muslim League through self-interest, and then ask me to join that party, could this be possible? I told him that I was a staunch Muslim Leaguer and would die one. I wished that he had become a two-*anna* member of the Muslim League and helped the nation to rise to great heights. I deplored the fact that he was not a Leaguer.

I was sitting in my room when my son-in-law Akbar's elder brother, Khan Muhammad Azam, arrived with a number of Khans. He reminded me that it was Dr Khan Sahib and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan who had led the bridal party as uncles of Akbar and had taken Nasim with them as a bride. My place was with Dr Khan Sahib, and not on the Opposition Benches. My reply to them was that if Dr Khan Sahib had accepted the Leadership as a Muslim Leaguer, I would have been sitting with him. I had given my word to Mr Jinnah to die a Muslim Leaguer, and I could not go back on it.

Further changes took place in the Central Government: Iskandar Mirza had taken over as President, and Firoz Khan Noon had been appointed Prime Minister. We had been sitting on the Opposition benches and twice, when the Government was about to be defeated, the House had been adjourned by the orders of the Governor.

Early one morning, I saw in the papers a list of awards and titles given by President Iskandar Mirza, with my name among them: I had been awarded the *Hilal-i-Quaid-i-Azam*. Telephone messages of congratulations started pouring in and when I telegraphed to say that I could not accept it, my friends were surprised. Having fought and succeeded in having it put down in the Constitution sent down the drain, that there would be no titles or awards in the State of Pakistan except for meritorious services, how could I possibly accept any title after that?

During our work on the different committees, I was glad to find that Mumtaz had chosen a batch of promising young lawyers, who were working well. Mr Nur Ahmad and I had

proposed a Bill in the Central Assembly to restrict excess in expenditure on marriages and ceremonial occasions, penalizing it as a criminal offence. It had gone through all the stages and on its third reading, in spite of Liaquat's assurance of full support, it was taken out of the agenda after his death. I proposed a similar Bill in the One Unit Legislature and piloted it until the third reading, but it met with a similar fate and was excluded from the agenda. The work of the Assembly was getting involved, respect for rules and procedures was vanishing, and most of the speeches had descended to mud-slinging. The sessions became depressing and irksome and the House was turning into a fish market. Members were being given every inducement to join the Republican Party; permits, lands, employment for their relations and offices for themselves, and one by one they were leaving the Muslim League Assembly Party. Three women members, one of them a staunch Muslim Leaguer and Secretary of the Muslim League Women's Committee, joined the Republican Party—all three of them to become Deputy Ministers.

Did democracy ever function in Pakistan? No, never. A handful of persons had captured power and they were continuing to rule. If one of them was not a success in one office, he was given another. If, when the First Report of the Basic Principles Committee had been handed to Liaquat in 1950, it had not been sent back to the Committee, and if the work of other committees had been expedited and general elections held all over the country by 1952, people in Pakistan would not have had to undergo so much suffering and pain. The unwarranted delay in framing the Constitution, and not letting real democracy come into being in the country, had led to all these difficulties. I asked Sir Robert Drayton, the draftsman, one day: 'How long would it take you to draft our Constitution?' He replied: 'Not more than six weeks.' Yes! Had the Constitution been drafted and enforced in 1952, where might the country be today!

Just a week before Martial Law was declared, I felt like walking out of the Assembly Hall and resigning my seat. In fact, I said so before a number of my colleagues, for I could not

stand the atmosphere of the Assembly, the talk across the benches, the working against all parliamentary procedures and practices, the hurling of epithets at each other. I would attend the Session, return home in disgust and brood over it. I lost my sleep, and as I lay awake at night many thoughts went through my head; my childhood, entering life with such aims and ideals to strive to achieve something worth having for the nation, for my family and myself. A study of Sharar's novels had made me long for opportunities to work for Islam, to shout *Allah-o-Akbar*, as in *Philipana* the Muslims did in the streets of Sicily. The dream realized and Pakistan came into existence with such aims and objective in view. I would recall my talks with Mr Jinnah, one by one, about the Constitution, dress, mode of living, and the revival of Islamic culture in that cherished land of ours. His saying to me: 'Give me the men to carry out all this', and my reply that Hindus were a rich nation, and with the directorships of industries behind them they could afford to enter public life. Muslims, being too poor, could not do so and they had to join services and professions, or remain in corners, earning their day-to-day bread and butter. I went even further and said that our national organization was rich and strong enough to draw them out of their present occupations and make them enter public life. I told Mr Jinnah in London that during my tours all over India, I had come across a number of brilliant Muslims, and after the creation of Pakistan we should get the talent wherever it existed amongst the Muslims in the subcontinent. He asked me to send him a list of names of such persons and I promised to do so. Those London talks of 1946 had become a treasure, a cherished memory to be preserved by me always. Then Liaquat's regime, Nazimuddin's administration, Bogra's Government, Suhrawardy's Prime-ministership, Muhammad Ali's short-lived handling of affairs as Prime Minister, and Firoz's holding of the exalted office: all passed before my mind's eye, one by one. The foreign policy, the internal administration, the economic sphere, and the political horizon, all so jumbled and in such a poor condition. Not a single person in sight in the political sphere who could take over the reins of

government immediately and sit at the helm of affairs to bring the nation out of such chaos.

If only Mr Jinnah had lived, even for five or six years more, to give the country a sound and stable constitution and to place the internal administration on a sound basis. Was he not already aware of the shortcomings of those who had been placed in power, and was he not trying to place his hands on others by trying them out? Would he not rather have sent the leaders who were fighting among themselves out of Pakistan to key countries, where they, with their outstanding ability and political jugglery, would have proved valuable assets? I could just envisage how well some of them could have served Pakistan in the United Nations Organization, USA, USSR, Great Britain, and a number of Muslim countries! They could have been very successful in such spheres. The home atmosphere thus cleansed of all wranglings and bitterness, sincere, hard-working persons could have been brought forward and placed in key positions, people who believed in honesty of purpose, with no ulterior motives. A Constitution could be framed and launched within two years of Partition, and real democracy introduced and worked in the country by people well-versed in administration and with unchequered integrity. Friendship could be maintained with all the nations equally, giving no chance to neighbouring countries to have enmity towards Pakistan. Did he not say: 'March the armies into Kashmir?' Would he have accepted a cease-fire on the Kashmir front when the Indian Army had no time to reorganize and was almost in rout? Were not two of the Brigadiers in tears when they were asked to accept the cease-fire? There were no broad-based policies of any type—of land tenure, education, economics, or reorganization of services—and mismanagement all around! The constant changes everywhere and the repercussions of them all, the dissolving of the constitution-making body and then the full-fledged, newly-framed Constitution, a sum-total of seven and a half years of labour, was sent down the drain. Had even one of the leaders in power, shown any skill in statecraft? Would Mr Jinnah have let power remain in the hands of only a few, and all democratic

ways of working in the political sphere be brushed aside? Then would come the comparisons in my mind, between present-day leaders and those that I had had the good fortune to know and be associated with; unique personalities, endowed with vision, initiative and exceptional ability, coupled with hard work and, most of all, the ideal of 'nation before self' as their motto. They worked with only one end in view, to make their nation worthy to stand with the foremost powers of the world. To have worked with them, and then to be one of these, who were flying at each other's throats all the time in responsible houses of parliament—this had been the tragedy of my existence.

Martial Law was declared and General Ayub, the Commander-in-Chief, was appointed the Defence Minister. A couple of weeks later Ahmad woke me up at 1.30 p.m. and told me that APP had telephoned to say that General Ayub Khan had taken over as President, and Iskandar Mirza had been relieved. Martial Law brought with it peace and quiet for the politicians, and perhaps time, too, for those who had helped to create the mess, to think and learn lessons from their past mistakes. For me, it had brought the leisure to revel in books that I longed to read, to meditate over the past, the living present and the future, and be able to pen the thoughts that crowd the brain during the years which bring 'the philosophic mind'.

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